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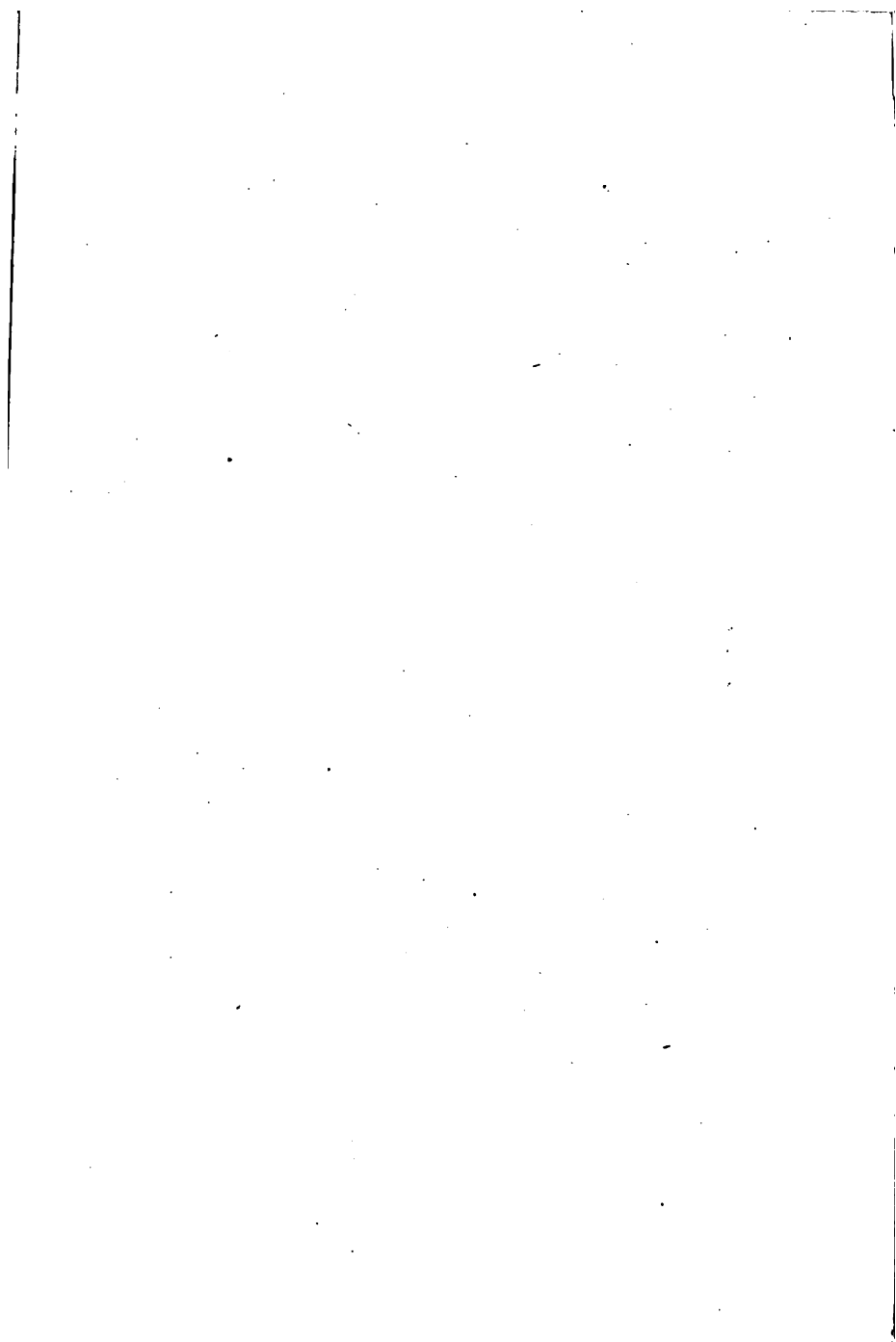




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CHOICE NOTES

ON THE

GOSPEL OF S. MATTHEW

DRAWN FROM OLD AND NEW
SOURCES.



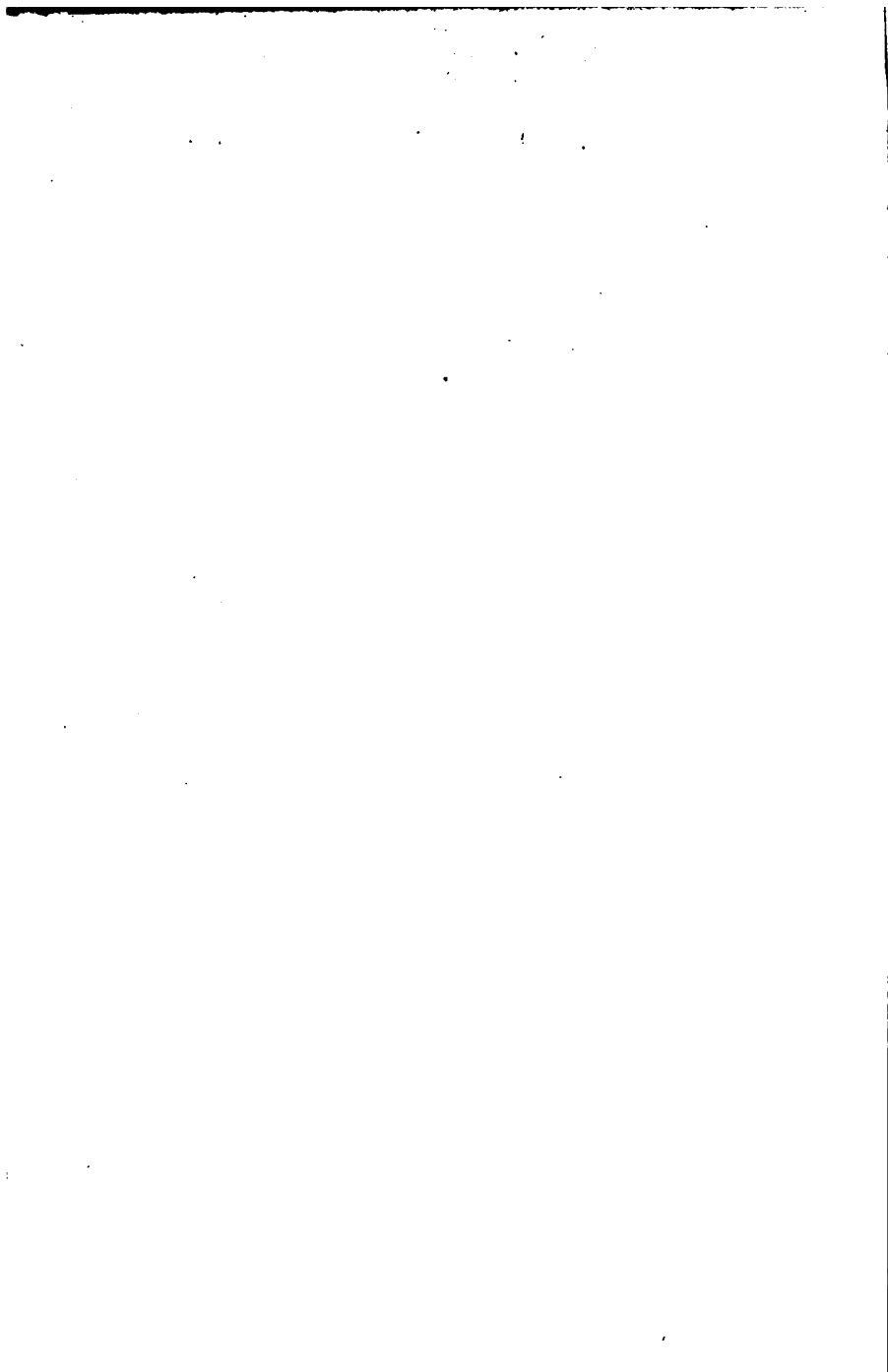
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THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. MATTHEW.

The Spirit of God acted upon the minds of the sacred writers in two ways ; that of *Revelation*, in disclosing to them things, of which they could have no knowledge ; and that of *Superintendence*, in respect of those things, with which the writer was well acquainted from trustworthy sources of information : in these they were effectually secured from error and misrepresentation by the superintendence of the Spirit of Truth. 2 Tim. iii. 16 ; 2 Pet. i. 20, 21 ; S. Luke i. 1, 4.—*Bp. Blomfield.*

Matthew among the Hebrews published a written Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were founding the Church at Rome. After their departure (meaning, probably, out of this life), Mark, himself the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also delivered to us in writing what had been preached by Peter ; and Luke, the follower of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who had leant on His breast, himself also residing at Ephesus, set forth a Gospel.—*S. Irenæus.*

The four Evangelists exhibit to us Jesus Christ under the mystical form of four animals : Ezek. i. 5, 10. For Matthew, as announcing to us the birth and death of the Redeemer, compares Him to a Man, i. 18. Mark, springing forth from the desert, assumes the aspect of a Lion, and announces the Kingdom of Christ and His mighty power, i. 1, 3. Luke also by the figurative emblem of a Calf declares Christ to have been sacrificed for us, i. 8, 10 ; while John shows by the likeness of an Eagle how the same Lord, after the resurrection of His Body, soared upwards to Heaven.—*Isidore of Seville.*

When we consider the respective styles of the Evangelists, as a matter of human composition, S. Matthew's Gospel is characterised by precept ; S. Luke's, by narrative ; S. Mark's, by human incident ; S. John's, by doctrine.—*I. Williams.*

CHAPTER I.

VERSE 1.—Let us begin and end all our actions with *the Name of the Lord Jesus* (Col. iii. 17.) “Whatsoever we do in word or deed,” says the Apostle ; we can neither begin nor end better. How sweet is the name of *Jesus*, or *Saviour* (verse 21) at the onset of our work, to save and keep us from all miscarriage in it. How sweet it is again, when we have done, if we can say, *Jesus*, again ; that we have been saved by it, been saved in it, and shall one day be saved through it ; that *Jesus* runs through all with us ! So then remember we to begin and end all in *Jesus*. The New Testament, the Covenant of our Salvation, begins and ends so. The *generation of Jesus* ; so it begins—confer S. Mark i. 1—and “*Come Lord Jesus* ;” so it ends Rev. xxii. 20. May we all end so, too ; and, when we are going home, commend our spirits with S. Stephen into His hands ; and, when He comes, may He receive them, to sing His praises, and Allelujahs to His Blessed Name, amidst the Saints and Angels in His glorious Kingdom for ever ! S. John xiv. 13, 14 ; Acts vii. 59.—*Dr. Mark Frank.*

V. 7.—I find the genealogy of my Saviour strangely chequered with four remarkable changes, in four immediate generations : first, Roboam begat Abia ; that is, a bad father begat a bad son : second, Abia begat Asa ; that is, a bad father a good son : third, Asa begat Josaphat ; that is, a good father a good son : fourth, Josaphat begat

Joram ; that is, a good father a bad son. I see, Lord, from hence, that my father's piety cannot be entailed : that is bad news for me ; but I see here, also, that actual impiety is not always hereditary : that is good news for my son. Ezek. xviii.—*Th. Fuller.*

V. 19.—Nothing so clearly discovers a spiritual man, as his treatment of an erring brother ; when our object is to bring about, not his exposure, but his acquittal, and rather to restore, than to upbraid him. xviii. 15 ; S. John viii. 9, 10 ; Gal. vi. 1.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 21.—For my own part, I cannot but declare, that so soon as the Christian religion discovers to me this one principle, that human nature is depraved and fallen from God, this clears my sight, and enables me to distinguish, throughout, the character of so Divine a mystery. For such is the whole frame and disposition of nature, as in all things, within and without us, to bespeak the loss of God's more immediate presence and more favourable communications. The mystery of the Incarnation discovers to man the greatness of his danger, by the greatness of those methods, which he stood in need of for his relief. Rom. iii. 23–27, viii. 3, 4 ; Gal. iii. 21, 22.—*Pascal.*

V. 21.—All our reasonable acts are divided into speaking, hearing, and thinking : and lo ! we cannot speak of *Jesus*, but He is as honey in our mouths ; and, if we hear of Him, the talk doth make the best melody in our ears ; finally, the greatest joy of our heart, and the truest also, springeth from our meditation upon Him. Ps. xix. 10 ; Cant. iv. 11 ; v. 16 ; Ps. xliii. 4 ; Hagg. ii. 6–9.—*Bp. Lake.*

He "Himself" (Greek) *shall save*. Joshua saved Israel, not by his own power, not of himself, but God by him ; neither saved he his own people, but the people of God : whereas, *Jesus* Himself, by His own power, the power of God, saves His own people, the people of God. Well, therefore, may we understand the interpretation of His Name to be "God the Saviour." V. 23 ; Heb. i. 3 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 ; Ps. xlv. 7 ; xcvi. 2.—*Bp. Pearson.*

V. 23.—I believe, O most condescending Majesty, that when Thou didst stoop so low, as to assume our frail nature, the Holy Ghost came on Thy sacred mother (S. Luke i. 35), and *the power of the Highest* did *overshadow her*, and that she did conceive, and lodge Thee in her womb, where Thou, who fillest heaven and earth, wert about nine months for our sakes imprisoned ; and therefore all love and praise be to Thee ! I believe, O most adorable Humility, that Thou wast at last born into the world ; that Thou, having only God for Thy Father, and Mary a pure Virgin for Thy mother, "whom all generations do call Blessed," both Thy conception and birth were perfectly immaculate ; that, being without sin Thyself, Thou mightest be a fit sacrifice to atone for us sinners, who, being born of unclean parents, were all by nature unclean ; and therefore all love, all glory be to Thee, O immaculate Lamb of God, "who takest away the sin of the world." I believe, O Blessed Saviour, that the two natures of God and man were in Thee so mysteriously united, without either change, or confusion, that they made in Thee but one Person, one Mediator, one Lord. Thou, O Eternal Word, didst "become flesh," and didst "dwell among us ;" and therefore all love all glory be to Thee !—*Bp. Ken.*

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 1.—These are the only true *wise men*, who use their learning to find out Heaven. Go on, blest pilgrims, in your holy voyage, and let no difficulties divert your purpose. Behold, a star shows your way, and God is at your journey's end. Lose not too long your time in the distraction of the city, nor concern yourselves in the politic troubles of the court (1 Kings xiii. 7, 11). Behold, the miraculous star shines not over that place (Jerusalem), where "the Sun of Righteousness" was to set. xxiii. 37; xxviii. 7.—*Austin*.

V. 2.—If you spend your time, while reading the Scriptures, in searching for poetical beauties, or making critical remarks, you act, as those wise men would have done, if they had sate down spectators of the phenomenon, but taken no step in following it. We are not, as Mr. Boyle expresses it, to stand looking at the telescope-case, but to look through it: children may be amused by the case, but the astronomer uses the telescope, as an instrument, whereby to discover the wonders of the planetary world. Thus let us endeavour to use the light, which God affords; not to amuse ourselves with it, but to make our way by it to the Light of Life. S. Luke ii. 15, 16; Acts i. 11; S. John xii. 35.—*R. Cecil*.

V. 3.—Ignorance, as it makes bold intruding men carelessly into unknown dangers, so it makes men oftentimes

causelessly fearful. Herod feared Christ's coming, because he mistook it : if that tyrant had known the manner of His spiritual regiment, he had spared both his own fright and the blood of others. And hence it is, that we fear death, because we are not acquainted with the virtue of it. Nothing but innocency and knowledge can give sound confidence to the heart. xiv. 26, 27 ; Ps. xiv. 5 ; S. John xviii. 36.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 9.—Why from *the East* ? There were Gentiles in the north and south too ; why not from them, as well, but from the east alone ? Marry, best of all from hence : it suits well to make even with Eve in Paradise ; that, as from the east came the first news of sin, so from thence should come the first news of saving from sin ; and to make even with Balaam too, that, as he came from the east to curse God's people, so these Magi (that some say were his scholars far removed) should come from the east to bless all the generations of the Gentiles after them (Numb. xxii. 7 ; xxiv. 17). Indeed, from whence should they come, but from the east ? All, that come *unto* Christ, saith Remigius, must come *from* Him first. "Now He is the true Dayspring. The East is His name," &c., as Zecharias speaks. Zech. vi. 12 ; Gen. iii. 24.—*Bp. Cosin.*

V. 10.—O Lord, Thou didst bring the wise heathen to the knowledge of thy Son by the leading of a star ! How early didst Thou make them partakers of this great blessing ; whose minds, having duly improved their natural light, Thou didst form by Thy Blessed Spirit to that degree of saving humility, that they were not offended

at the meanness of our Saviour's circumstances. Otherwise, the pride of their hearts would have caused them to fly back, as Naaman did from Elisha. 2 Kings v. 12; Exod. v. 2; Ps. i. 2, 3; 1 Cor. i. 18.—*Bonnell*.

V. 11.—Three acts are here—*falling down, worshipping, and offering*; the first, the worship of the body; the second, of the soul; the third, of our goods. With these three—our bodies, our souls, our goods—we are to worship Him: with all these His worship is to be performed: without them all is but a lame and maimed service, neither fit for *wise men* to give, nor for Christ to receive. Ps. ciii. 1, 2; lxxii. 9–12.—*Dr. Mark Frank*.

V. 12.—Ought we not often, in soul, to go with the wise men to Bethlehem, being directed by the stars of grace, and there fall down, and worship the little King; there offer the *gold* of charity, the *frankincense* of devotion, the *myrrh* of penitency; and then return, not to cruel Herod, or troubled Jerusalem, but *another way*, a better way, unto our long and happy home? Heb. xi. 15, 16; 2 S. Peter ii. 20–22.—*Sutton*.

V. 13.—Thus early did the infant Jesus exemplify his own subsequent direction, so consoling to the Apostles and the first sufferers for the faith. "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another." x. 23; xii. 14, 15; xiv. 12, 13; S. John xi. 54; 1 Kings xix. 3.—*J. Ford*.

V. 14.—The children of God do never reason thus—If God hath appointed the matter, it skilleth not what I do; but they use the appointed means, and leave God's counsels to Himself. Gen. xxii. 1–3; Judges vii. 14–16; Acts xxvii. 24–31; 2 Tim. ii. 10–19.—*Bp. Babington*.

And was there. We may be safe in Egypt, if we be there in obedience to God ; and, we may perish among the babes of Bethlehem, if we be there by our own election.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 16.—It pleased the Prince of Martyrs to have His train composed; when He made His entry into the world, of infants, suited to an infant Saviour ; a train of innocents, meet to follow the spotless Lamb, who came to convince the world of sin, and to redeem it in righteousness. They were “the first fruits,” offered to the Son of God after His Incarnation ; and their blood the first, that flowed on His account. They appeared, as so many champions in the field, clad in the King’s coat of armour, to intercept the blows directed against Him. xix. 14, xi. 16 ; Isa. xi. 6.
—*Bp. Horne.*

V. 18.—Children are such blossoms, as every trifling wind deflowers ; and to be disordered at their fall were to be fond of certain troubles, but the most uncertain comforts. We give hostages to fortune, when we bring children into the world ; and how unstable this is, we know, and must therefore hazard the adventure. Are you offended that it has pleased God to snatch your pretty babes from the infinite contingencies of so perverse an age, in which there is so little temptation to live ? Say not, they might have come later to their destiny. ’Tis no small happiness to be happy quickly.—*J. Evelyn.*

V. 19.—Death, like a dark passage to a comfortless prison, puts an end to all the ungodly man would have, and is a beginning to all he would not. Heb. xi. 15, 16.
—*Dean Young.*

The robes of Majesty and the rags of beggary are equal preludes to the shroud ; and the throne is only a precipice, from whence to fall with greater noise and more extensive ruin into the grave. Acts xii. 20-24.—*S. Davies.*

V. 22.—We must ever bear in mind the purpose and counsel of God—wherefore from the beginning He kept His Son under the discipline of the cross ; for this was His method of bringing about the Redemption of the Church. Hence He “bare our infirmities,” was compassed about with dangers, was liable to fears ; that by such means He might bless His ransomed Church with perpetual peace. Hence His danger became our safety ; His fear was our confidence. His tender age indeed precluded Him from all fear ; but because He was thus taken from one place to another, in consequence of the fear of Joseph and Mary, we may well say that He bare our fears, that He might procure for us quietness and confidence. Ps. lxxxviii. 15 (Prayer-book Version).—*Calvin.*

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 2.—The first Evangelical duty, that God requires for obtaining mercy and pardon—'tis Repentance. Before our faith can be persuaded of pardon, nay, before it can lay hold of pardon, nay, before God will reach out His pardon, He exacts Repentance. Before thou stretch out thine hand of faith, thou must humble thyself upon the knee of repentance. Faith, that's the cordial to revive and comfort thee ; but Repentance, that's the purgation, that must first work, and fit thee to receive this cordial. Still, the Scripture gives the precedency to Repentance. 'Tis the primitive original grace, even before faith itself, as it serves to justify. Isa. i. 16–19 ; S. Mark i. 15 ; Acts xx. 21 ; xxvi. 20.—*Bp. Brownrig.*

Belief of the world and judgment to come, faith in the promises and sufferings of Christ for mankind, fear of His Majesty; love of his mercy, grief for sin, hope for pardon, suit for grace—these we know to be elements of true contrition.—*Hooker.*

This phrase, the Kingdom of Heaven, is only to be found in the Gospel of S. Matthew ; that he might wean the Jews, for whose sake he wrote, from their notions of a worldly kingdom.—*Bengel.*

V. 4.—Could one only attain to perfection by exalted employments, great elevation of soul, and sublime medita-

tions, thou mightest have some excuse, and plead thy incapacity, and say, thou canst not soar thus high. Were it required of thee to scourge thyself daily, so as to draw blood, to fast upon bread and water, to walk always barefooted, to wear constantly a hair-shirt and sack-cloth, thou mightest reply that thou dost not feel thy strength equal thereto. But Jesus Christ requires none of these things from thee. He simply desires, that thou shouldest do well the ordinary duties of each day. If therefore thou hast hitherto neglected to offer all thy actions to God, especially thy first waking thoughts, thy meals, and thy recreations, begin from this day forth to offer them up to Him. If thou hast prayed with little reverence, attention, and fervour, form the resolution to act better for the future. A merchant in his commercial business, the mother of a family in a household, a scholar in the midst of his studies, can thus attain to perfection at little cost. Thou wouldst be most guilty, if thou didst not use so simple a means to render thyself more and more pleasing to a God, who, for thy love and in order to thy happiness, spared neither His own glory, nor repose, nor yet life. 1 Cor. x. 31.—*Rodriguez.*

V. 6.—The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.—*S. Augustine.*

In the Baptism of Repentance, they confessed their sins; in the Baptism of Christ, they confessed Christ. Acts xix. 1-5.—*Bengel.*

V. 8.—None are to measure their first regeneration, either by the vehemence, or by the continuance, of their sorrow for sin, but by the effect, which it produceth: if

it makes them hate sin, so as most carefully to avoid it ; if it makes them hate themselves, so as to become denied to all self-pleasure and self-will, and resigned to the will of God, they are not to be scrupulous about anything farther, but to examine these carefully. 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. *Scougal*.

V. 10.—Though He calls them *vipers*, yet He exhorts them to *repent*. We must despair of none (Acts viii. 22, 23). His severity was tempered with love ; He stood between the Law and the Gospel ; He preached both. S. John i. 15, &c.—*J. Ford*.

Faith is a humble self-denying grace : it makes the Christian nothing, in himself, and all, in God. S. Luke v. 8–10 ; Eph. iii., 8–12 ; S. John v. 4.—*Abp. Leighton*.

V. 13.—*Then*, when the people were full of repentance, and did yearn for grace ; *then*, when they began to conceit too much of John, that he was the Christ ; *then*, when our Saviour was of the ripe age of the Priesthood, and had seen thirty years in the world—*then* came &c. —*Bp. Hacket*.

V. 14—*I have need, &c.* True humility, the cheapest, yet best, ornament of the soul . . . The first thing in religion is humility ; the second, and the third thing, is humility. v. 3.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 16.—The mystery of the Trinity is demonstrated in the Baptism of Christ. The Lord is baptized ; the Spirit descends in the form of a Dove ; the voice of the Father is heard testifying of His Son. xxviii. 19 ; Prov. viii. 22–32 ; Isa. xiii. 1 ; 1 S. John v. 8.—*S. Jerome*.

V. 17.—The Baptism of our Saviour stands us under the Gospel, instead of the same comfort, which the rainbow afforded unto the old world. The rainbow is a reflection of the sun-beams in a watery cloud, and was ordained, as a sign of pacification (Gen. ix. 13) that God's anger should no more strive with man. Such a rainbow was Jesus Christ (Rev. iv. 3.) Look upon Him, not standing majestically in a cloud above ; but wading, like a humble servant, into the waters of Jordan beneath ; look upon Him, how He sanctifies that element, which was once a means to drown the world, and now is made a means to save it ; look upon Him in that posture, as a rainbow in the water ; and you may read God's sure covenant with His whole Church, that His anger is pacified in His well beloved Son, and that He will be gracious with His inheritance. S. John i. 29 ; Eph. ii. 14 ; 1 S. Peter iii. 21.—*Bp. Hacket.*

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 1.—*Led up of the Spirit.* Lest we should suppose the unclean Spirit to have any power over Him, who, being full of the Spirit of God, went where He listed, and acted, as He willed. S. John x. 18 ; Rom. viii. 13, 14 ; Gal. v. 18.—*Bede.*

V. 2.—In these days, during this retirement, things of the highest import were transacted between God, and the Mediator.—*Bengel.*

V. 3.—The devil does not say here, “*Pray to God, to your Father in heaven, &c.,*” but he says *command* ; thus showing, that he understood perfectly well the true meaning of that title, “*The Son of God,*” afterwards so disputed, and upon which nothing less than the whole cause of our Salvation lay suspended. viii. 29 ; xvi. 16 ; xxii. 42 ; xxvi. 63 ; xxvii. 40–43, 54 ; S. John v. 18.—*J. Ford.*

V. 4.—*Every word.* Above all, his chief delight was in the Holy Scripture, one leaf whereof he professed he would not part with, though he might have the whole world in exchange. That was his wisdom, his comfort, his joy ; out of that he took his motto, “*Less than the least of all God’s mercies.*” In that he found the substance, Christ ; and in Christ, remission of sins ; yea,

in His Blood He placed the goodness of all his good works. Acts v. 20 ; xx. 27.—*I. Walton* (Life of *Rev. G. Herbert*).

V. 6.—*For it is written.* Observe the peculiar wickedness, unbelief, and insolence of Satan. Our Lord commends *every word* in the Divine Revelation ; and Satan immediately mutilates it, and takes away from it, studiously omitting in his very next temptation those important words, “to keep thee *in all thy ways*—(See S. Luke iv. 10, and for somelike instances of suppression, Gen. iii. 3 ; Numb. xxii. 14 ; 1 Kings xxi. 6 ; S. John ii. 19, 20 ; S. Matt. xxvi. 61.)—words, which guard and preserve the promise from any presumptuous reliance on a *particular* Providence to save us, when we wilfully thrust ourselves into danger. Thus would Satan now also impose upon us by texts, wrested from the context, and by plausible counterfeits of the truth ; mixing up a portion of God’s Word, so as better to recommend his own dangerous errors, and to blind us to our destruction. Acquaintance with “the *whole* counsel of God,” constant attention to received Catholic truth, and a preference of general to particular statements in Scripture—of what is practical to what is speculative, of what is plain to what is obscure—these, under God, will prove our best preservatives against all these crafts of the enemy, and all the sophistries of men. 1 S. John iv. 1–7.—*J. Ford.*

V. 7.—Though thou canst not clear an obscure Scripture, thou shalt always find a sufficient guard in one, that is clearer.—*Abp. Leighton.*

V. 8.—He *showed* Him *their glory* ; but He carefully concealed their utter vanity. So he does, when he tempts us. Ps. xvi. 12.—*J. Ford.*

V. 10.—Christ, the Son of David, entered upon His career, as David himself did typically, by a special conflict; showing thereby, that His Kingdom in this world was to be of a *militant* character; His reign, as the Son of Solomon, in the abundance of *peace* being yet for to come. As for the Scriptures He here quoted, they are so plain and simple, that a child may understand and use them. And what are they, in this connection, but the “smooth stones out of the brook,” with which our true Shepherd-champion brought at once to the ground the huge Goliath of all sin and wickedness? 1 Sam. xvii. 34–37, 40; Eccclus. ii. 1; iv. 17.—*J. Ford.*

V. 11.—*Angels came.* O what reverence, what love, what confidence deserveth so sweet a saying! for their presence, reverence; for their good will, love; for their tuition, confidence. Heb. i. 14.—*S. Bernard.*

How sweet to the believer is the reflection, that, though he is yet a stranger in the world of spirits, still the world of spirits is not a stranger to him! Ps. xxxiv. 7.—*Toplady.*

V. 17.—*Repent ye.* This Penance is the chiefest thing in all the Scripture. Herein standeth right Penance; *first*, we must know and acknowledge our sins, be sorry for them and lament them in our hearts; then, the *second* point is faith, that Christ will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins, and not impute them unto us; *thirdly*, we must have an earnest purpose to leave all sin and wickedness, and no more to commit the same.—*Bp. Latimer.*

V. 19.—They were first, as S. John reports (i. 35, 44) acquainted with Christ ; afterwards, made disciples ; and, last of all, Apostles. And therefore Christ here saith, “I *will* make you, &c.” He saith not, I do now make you ; but, having instructed them all His life, and breathing on them the Holy Ghost, after His Resurrection He speaks in the present ; “As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.” (S. John xx. 21 ; S. Matt. xxviii. 19.) They were a great while learners, before they were leaders.
—*Dean' Boys.*

CHAPTER V.

VERSE 2.—Let us imagine to ourselves that we saw our Saviour, seated upon the Mount of Blessing, with His eyes devoutly set towards heaven, and His hands affectionately stretched forth over the adoring and attentive multitude, and with looks full of concern for the good of souls, gravely and pathetically distilling down upon them the dew of His heavenly doctrine, and tempering His authority with the style of goodness and kindness, as well as His Divinity with the veil of flesh. Who can with sufficient wonder contemplate so pleasing a scene of love and sweetness? And who, that will contemplate it, can find in his heart to transgress a Law, delivered with so much condescension, or offend a Lawgiver, so infinitely, so amazingly good? S. Luke iv. 22 ; xxiv. 32 ; S. John vii. 46.—*Norris.*

V. 3.—As pride was the beginning of sin, so humility must be the beginning of the Christian discipline.—*S. Augustine.*

Pride is the first vice to oppose us ; and the last vice, which we overcome. Prov. xvi. 18 ; Job xlii. 5, 6.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 4.—It is worthy of observation that all the Beatitudes are affixed to conditions of humiliation, or

suffering. Listen not to the judgment of the world about afflictions, but to the judgment of the Spirit ; not to what sense feels, but to what faith expects. Rom. viii. 17 ; Rev. vii. 14.—*Dr. Manton.*

V. 5.—Not that *the meek* shall not also obtain *mercy*, and *see God* and *be comforted*, and at last come to the *kingdom of heaven* ; but, in the meanwhile, he and he only *possesses the earth*, as he goes towards the kingdom of heaven, by being humble, and cheerful, and content with what his good God has allotted him. He has no turbulent, repining, vexatious thoughts, that he deserves better ; nor is he vexed, when he sees others possessed of more honours or more riches, than his wise God has allotted for his share. But he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness ; such a quietness, as makes his very dreams pleasing both to God and himself. I have heard a grave Divine say, that “God has two dwellings ; one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart.” Ps. xxxvii. 11 ; Phil. iv. 10–20.—*I. Walton.*

V. 6.—The whole life of a good Christian is nothing else, but a state of holy *desire*. Gen. xlix. 18 ; Rom. viii. 18–25 ; Rev. xxii. 20.—*S. Augustine.*

It is not enough to wish to be good, unless we *hunger* after it. Ps. cxix. 2, 10.—*S. Jerome.*

V. 7.—It is remarkable that of *the merciful* it is here said, that “they shall obtain *mercy* ;” *mercy*, not wages. God will reward their mercifulness ; but that recompense shall be matter of mercy, not of debt. It is the glory of our religion that our people can be merciful without an opinion

of *merit*, and “give their goods to feed the poor” from a pure principle of the Love of God. Ex. xx. 6 ; 2 Tim. i. 16–18 ; S. Jude 20, 21.—*Dr. Horneck.*

V. 8.—What is a *pure heart*? It is a heart, which in every respect rests entirely content with God alone, which finds no relish nor takes any delight, except in Him. xxii. 36–38 ; Ps. lxxiii, 24, 25 ; S. John vi. 68.—*Hæftenus.*

V. 9.—If thou have peace in thyself, and lovest the peace of thy brethren, so is God, through Christ, at peace with thee ; and thou His beloved son, and heir also. On the other side, cursed be the peace-breakers, pick-quarrels, whisperers, backbiters, sowers of discord, dispraisers of them, that be good, to bring them out of favour, interpreters to evil of that, which is done for a good purpose, finders of faults, where none is, stirrers up of princes to battle and war ; and, above all, cursed be they, that falsely belie the true preachers of God’s Word, to bring them into hate, and to shed their blood wrongfully, for hate of the Truth ; for all such are children of the devil. Rom. xii. 18 ; xiv. 17–19 ; Heb. xii. 14.—*W. Tyndale.*

V. 12.—This, O my soul, is the way to Beatitude, how strange soever it may seem to our sense. These are the words of the Eternal Verity, how improbable soever they may sound in our ear. Choose, whether here thou wilt be falsely happy for a while ; or truly happy for ever. If we resolve for the bliss of the life to come, we are like to meet with affliction in this ; and, if we place our felicity in this, we are sure to meet with misery in the other. Choose, which thou wilt ; for one of the two must be thy portion. Heb. xi. 25, 26 ; 2 Cor. iv. 8–10, 17, 18.—*Austin.*

V. 14.—*Ye are the light.* Sanctify, O Lord, the pastors of Thy Church, and make us duly respect them, as the preservers of Religion: illuminate their understandings with the light of knowledge, and inflame their wills with fire of Thy love; that their good lives may shine before us, and our obedience follow them; and both together bring us all to Thee.—*Austin.*

V. 16.—The Gospel of Christ is very particularly to be considered, as a trust, deposited with us, in behalf of others, in behalf of mankind, as well as for our own instruction. No one has a right to be called a Christian, who doth not do somewhat in his station towards the discharge of this trust; who doth not, for instance, assist in keeping up the profession of Christianity, where he lives.—*Bp. Butler.*

V. 17.—Our Lord anticipates objections, and obviates prejudices; whereas the mode, pursued by founders of a new system, or religion, commonly is at once to deny what has been done, or said, before them, and then to build again afresh. This arises from the overliking we bear to our own system and interests. But our Lord's whole work was one of humility. As He condescended to follow in the steps of the Baptist in preaching repentance, so here He takes His key from Moses; and then He blends with this illustration of His humility the truth so important to the Ministers of religion, that they ought never rudely, or needlessly, to shock the feelings and prejudices of their people. Acts v. 36; viii. 9; 3 S. John 9.—*J. Ford.*

V. 18.—The Law may be considered, either as a *Rule*, or, as a *Covenant*. Christ hath freed all believers from

the rigour and curse of the Law, considered as a Covenant ; but He hath not freed them from obedience to the Law, considered as a Rule ; and all those Scriptures, which speak of the Law, as if it were abrogated and annulled, take it considered, as a Covenant ; those again, that speak of it, as if it were a Law still in force, take it considered, as a Rule. The Law, as a Covenant, is rigorous ; and under that rigour we now are not, if we be in Christ ; but the Law, as a Rule, is equal ; and under that equity we are still, though we be in Christ. Gal. ii. 16–21 ; iii. 10–13 ; Isa. ii. 3 ; 1 Cor. ix. 21.—*Bp. Sanderson.*

V. 19.—*Do and teach.* Our works speak more effectually than our words do. Acts i. 1 ; 1 Tim. iv. 16.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 20.—It was a well known saying among the Jews, that, if two men only were to be saved, one certainly would be a Scribe, and the other a Pharisee. Certainly, unless our *righteousness* exceed theirs, we shall never come to heaven : but how shall we escape the nethermost hell, if our *unrighteousness* exceed theirs? xxv. 45 ; S. John vii. 48.—*Bp. Sanderson.*

V. 22.—As there are here three degrees of punishment, corresponding severally to the three degrees and aggravations of guilt, and the far severest punishment that of hell-fire, denounced on him, who shall say to his brother, “*Thou fool ;*” might we not understand this term of reproach to reflect upon the *religion* of the person thus outraged? This, then, being an evil speaking of the deepest malignity, must needs draw upon itself the most

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severe punishment. It was among the Jews, "the *fool*, who said in his heart, there is no God." Ps. xiv. 1 ; Job ii. 9, 10. It is worthy of observation that the two offences, which expose us to God's most severe condemnation, are both of them sins of the tongue. See xii. 31, 37 ; S. James iii. 6.—*J. Ford.*

V. 24.—How wonderful is the Grace of God ! He will have us settle our debt of "an hundred pence" with our neighbour, before He releases us from the obligation of our debt to Himself of "ten thousand talents !" Thus in the Lord's Prayer vi. 12. "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God ?"—*J. Ford.*

V. 28.—All sin is perfected in three ways ; namely, by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. The suggestion is from the devil ; the delight is from our flesh ; the consent from our spirit (our own choice and will). Gen. iii. 6 ; Joshua vii. 21 ; S. James i. 13, 14.—*S. Gregory.*

V. 34.—"The caution against *swearing at all* is intended to be a safeguard against perjury," says Tertullian ; just, as before, the *least* commandment served, as the preventative of the greatest sin. The prohibition of all causeless anger is the check to murder ; that of the wanton look is the check to adultery.—*J. Ford.*

V. 34, 36.—How sacred the whole frame of the world is, how all things are to be considered as God's, and referred to Him, is fully taught by our Blessed Saviour in the case of *oaths*. Here you see all things in the whole order of nature from the highest *heaven* to the lowest *hair* are always to be considered, not separately,

as they are in themselves, but as in some relation to God. And, if this be good reasoning, thou shalt not *swear by the earth*, or *city*, or thy *hair*, because these things are God's and in a certain manner belong to Him ; is it not exactly the same reasoning to say, thou shalt not *murmur* at the seasons of the earth, the states of cities, and the change of times ; because all these things are in the hands of God, have Him for their Author, are directed and governed by Him to such ends, as are most suitable to His wise Providence ? As, when we think of God Himself, we are to have no sentiments, but of praise and thanksgiving ; so, when we look at those things, which are under His rule and governance, we are to receive them with the same tempers.—*Wm. Law.*

Swearing is a sin, whereunto neither profit incites, nor pleasure allures, nor necessity compels, nor inclination of nature persuades.—*F. Quarles.*

He, that speaks, had better in all things speak plainly ; for truth is the easiest to be told. 2 Cor. iii. 12.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 39.—Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy ; but, in passing it over, he is superior ; for it is a Prince's part to pardon.—*Lord Bacon.*

The Christian's courtesy prevents him from giving offence ; and his charity from taking it. 1 Cor. xiii. 5.—*Gresley.*

The surest way to keep others in temper is to keep ourselves so.—*Adam.*

V. 44.—To return good for good is human ; to return evil for evil is brutal ; to return evil for good is diabolical ; but to return good for evil is Divine. Gen. xx. 27 ; 1 K. xiii. 6 ; Rom. v. 8 ; xii. 20, 21.—*Royard.*

V. 44.—When we are not able to do any thing for men's behoof, when through maliciousness or unkindness they vouchsafe not to accept any other good at our hands, *Prayer* is that, which we always have it in our power to bestow, and they never in theirs to refuse. 1 Sam. xii. 23.—*Hooker*.

V. 45.—Nothing causes us so nearly to resemble God, as the forgiveness of injuries. Jer. ix. 24 ; Is. xxviii. 21 ; 1 S. John iv. 8.—*S. Chrysostom*.

Sure, he is not fit to *live with God* in the next world, who is not fit to *live with man* in this. Heb. xii. 4.—*Dr. Allestry*.

V. 46.—How many consciences are kept in quiet upon no other foundation, but because they sin under the authority of the Christian world ! Who would be content with seeing how contrary his life is to the Gospel, but because he sees that he lives, as the Christian world doth ? S. John vii. 48.—*Wm. Law*.

V. 47.—As for “doing as others do,” if that is to be the rule of right, what is the meaning of all those texts, which tell us that Christ came to “redeem us unto Himself for a *peculiar people* ?” Peculiar in what ? Why, in acting differently from others. We must be peculiar, if we are Christ's people, in utterly renouncing Mammon. We must be peculiar, in acting upon those Christian principles, which are foolishness to the worldly. We must be peculiar, in taking God's Law for our rule, God's love for our motive, God's glory and approbation for our end and aim. Isa. xliii. 21 ; and viii. 18 ; Titus ii. 14.—*A. W. Hare*.

Even as your Father, &c. When Christ comes with His scales, thou shalt not be measured with *that man* ; but every man shall be weighed *with God*. 2 S. Pet. i. 4 ; 1 S. John iii. 3.—*Dr. Donne.*

V. 48.—How wise and holy are Thy commandments, O Lord ! How sweetly enforced with fit and evident and familiar arguments ! Be Thou my Sovereign King, O glorious Jesu ! Be Thou my soul's director for ever ! Thou tellest me my duty, and enablest me to do it ; Thou settest me to work, and promisest me a rich reward. Oh, make me merciful. Oh, make me *perfect*, as Thou art : then shall I love Thee and delight in Thee for ever ! Ps. cxix. 33-40.—*Austin.*

CHAPTER VI.

VERSE 1.—Fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, that is, denial of self, love of others, and devotion to God, are the three heads, under which our Lord brings all Christian duties. Col. iv. 12.—*Dr. Pusey.*

Almsgiving, prayer, and fasting are the three especial Christian sacrifices : the first, out of our estates ; the second, of our souls ; the third, from our bodies—which are the three principal parts of a man, every one, therefore, being obliged to pay its tribute of acknowledgment to the Creator.—*T. Aquinas.*

V. 3.—The true Christian's chief care lies in right ordering and commanding his own spirit ; for, where the hypocrite's work ends, there the true Christian's work begins.—*Abp. Leighton.*

V. 6.—He, who would pray, must first retire. The spirit of the world and the spirit of prayer are contrary the one to the other. . . The soul, before she can take her flight to heaven, must plume and balance her wings by holy meditation : she must consider the nature of God, to whom she is to pray ; of herself, who is to pray to Him—the sins, of which she has been guilty, to confess them ; and the graces, of which she stands in need, to pray for them. All this is not to be done but by deep meditation ; and meditation, which is the mother of

devotion, is the daughter of retirement. They, who do not meditate, cannot pray; and they, who do not retire, can do neither. Ps. iv. 4, 5; xxxix. 4.—*R. F. Suckling.*

V. 7.—*Repetitions* in prayer are not to be absolutely condemned, as the manner of some is to condemn them, in regard to the Church Services. When a man is in earnest, he will generally, more or less, repeat himself. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak.” Thus David (Ps. cxvi. ; cxlviii.); thus our Divine pattern Himself (xxvi. 44); thus the glorious worshippers in Heaven, whom we hope to join, and for whose worship we are even now preparing (Rev. iv. 8). But who would ever think of confounding these simple repetitions, the expressions of genuine devout feeling, with the *vain repetitions* of the ignorant heathen, who, because they knew not, as we know, how gracious the Lord is, and because they had not, as we have, any sure promise to depend upon, thought they should be *heard for their much speaking*.—*J. Ford.*

Prayer is a Divine converse, differing from human, as God differs from man. S. John iv. 24.—*J. W. Newman.*

V. 9.—*Pray ye.* In the due performance of this duty, we are directed and assisted by the Form of Prayer, composed and dictated for that purpose by Him, who best knew what we ought to pray for, and how we ought to pray; what matter of desire, what manner of address, what disposition of mind, would be most pleasing and acceptable to His Father, would most become and befit us in our approaches to Him. We might consequently observe many things, concerning these particulars, dis-

cernible in this Form ; the sublimity, the gravity, the necessity, the singular choiceness of the matter, together with the fit order and just disposition thereof, according to the natural precedency of things in dignity, or necessity ; the full brevity, the deep plainness, the comely simplicity of expression ; the lowly reverence signified therein, accompanied with due faith and confidence : these, and the like virtues, directive of our devotion, we might observe, generally, running through the whole contexture of this venerable Form. Deut. xxvi. 5-13 ; Rom. viii. 26.—*Dr. Barrow.*

Our Father. The very first words mark how full they are of grace and kindness. O ! man, you did not dare to lift up your eyes to Heaven ; your eyes were bowed down to the earth ; and suddenly you receive the Grace of Christ. Out of a wicked servant, you are made a good *son* : this, therefore, is no arrogance on your part ; it is faith. To make mention of the grace which you have received, is not pride, but true devotion. S. John xx. 17 ; Rom. viii. 15.—*S. Ambrose.*

He did not bid us say, “ *My Father,*” but “ *Our Father ;*” that, being taught we have a common Father, we might shew that we have a brotherly good-will one towards another. . . . The mention of *Heaven* withdraws him, who prays, from earth, and fastens him to the mansions above. Col. iii. 1-4.—*S. Chrysostom.*

He, who hath elsewhere taught us, that “ the *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” hath, in like manner, instructed us *first* to pray, *Hallowed be Thy Name.* Ps. ix. 20 ; xxxiv. 11.—*Bp. Medley.*

V. 11.—By saying “*Give us*,” we acknowledge it to be of God ; but when we call the bread *ours*, we shew how God gives it, namely, in the use of means. For bread is *ours*, not only in the right of promise—“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”—but by service, and by quiet working in an orderly calling. Gen. iii. 17–19 ; 2 Th. iii. 11, 12.—*Bp. Reynolds*.

V. 12.—It is not for nothing that our Saviour yokes these two petitions together, *Give us this day our daily bread* and *Forgive us our trespasses*. Surely, methinks, He teaches us that so long as we have need to say, *Give*, so long we have need to say, *Forgive* ; and that daily repentance is as necessary for the soul, as daily sustenance for the body. S. James iii. 2 ; Gal. v. 17.—*Dr. Dyke*.

Conceive a revengeful unforgiving man repeating this prayer, which you all, I hope, repeat daily ; conceive a man, with a heart full of wrath against his neighbour, with a memory, which treasures up little wrongs, and insults, and provocations he fancies himself to have received from that neighbour ; conceive such a man praying to God most High, to *forgive him his trespasses, as he forgives the man, who has trespassed against him*.

. . . . But he does *not* forgive his neighbour ; so he prays to God *not* to forgive him. God grant that his prayer may not be heard ; for he is praying a curse on his own head ! Isa. i. 15 ; lix. 1–4.—*A. W. Hare*.

V. 13.—After we have received the most especial manifestations from God’s love and favour in Christ, *then* may we expect to be assaulted by the devil. From the connection between those two petitions, *Forgive us our*

trespasses, and *lead us not into temptation*, note that no sooner can we get the evidence of our pardon, but we may expect to be tempted of the devil. iii. 17 ; iv. 1 ; xvi. 18, 20 ; xxvi. 31.—*Chr. Love.*

Deliver us from evil (or, the evil one). Satan hath three titles given him in Scripture, setting forth his malignity against the Church of God—a dragon, to note his malice ; a serpent, to note his subtlety ; and a lion, to note his strength : but none of these can stand before prayer. The greatest malice, the malice of Haman, sinks under the prayer of Esther (Esth. iv. 1–3) ; the deepest policy, the counsel of Ahitophel, withers before the prayer of David (2 Sam. xv. 31) ; the hugest army, a host of a thousand thousand Ethiopians, ran away, like cowards, before the prayer of Asa. 2 Ch. xiv. 11 ; Acts iv. 29 ; xii. 5 ; xvi. 25.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

Amen—Blessed Lord, therefore be it according to these our petitions and desires, and so much the rather, because these our requests are not the product of our imaginations and weak judgments ; but that Son of Thine, who best knew Thy will, and what Thou wouldest grant, hath taught us *thus to pray*. Judg. xiii. 23 ; 1 Chro. xvii. 25.—*Sir M. Hale.*

I adore and love Thee, O Jesu, who by concluding this prayer in this manner, hast taught us that the right end of our prayers should be the Glory of God ; that we should ever be careful to mix praise with our prayers, and be as zealous to give thanks for what we receive, as to pray for what we want.—Phil. iv. 6 ; Ps. l. 23 ; Dan. vi. 10.—*Bp. Ken.*

V. 14.—We should not overlook, that in all the petitions, enjoined by our Lord, He judgeth that one most worthy of further enforcement, which relates to the forgiveness of sins ; in which He would have us *merciful*, as the only means of obtaining mercy.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 16.—There be three ends, whereunto if our fast be directed, it is then a work profitable to us, and accepted of God. The first is to tame the flesh, that it be not too wanton, but tamed and brought into subjection to the spirit (1 Cor. ix. 27). The second is that the spirit may be more fervent and earnest in prayer (Acts xiii. 2 ; and xiv. 23). The third is that our fast be a testimony and witness with us before God of our humble submission to His High Majesty, when we confess our sins. These are the three ends, or right uses of fasting : the first belongeth most properly to private fasts ; the other two are common, as well to public, as private.—*Homilies*.

V. 18.—If we take so great pains to conceal our vices, lest we should forfeit by their exposure the praise of man, with how much greater care should we hide our virtues, lest we should lose the Glory of Heaven ?—*S. Bernard*.

In the Holy Scriptures, the future *reward* is everywhere promised and propounded, as a motive to excite and stir us up to good works. . . . Now what an unreasonable conceit it is to think that, when a reward is promised, as an encouragement to work, it should be a fault and sin to work with an eye, or respect, to the reward. It is so far from being sinful, that we sin, if we do not so ; yea, if we do not fix our eye upon the Heavenly reward, and employ our chief studies, cares,

and desires about the obtaining of it. For, unless we do this, we transgress the plain commandment of God, who alone hath power to determine what we ought to do, and who best knows what is fittest for us to do. 1 Cor. ix. 24-27; Heb. xii. 1, 2; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.—*Bp. Bull.*

V. 19.—Love to the earth, in preference of Heaven, is the great ruling passion of the human mind.—Jer. ii. 13; Col. iii. 2.—*Bp. Medley.*

V. 21.—There was never soul, that made Christ and Glory the principal end, nor that obtained rest with God, whose desire was not set upon Him; and that, above all things else in the world whatsoever. Christ brings the heart to Heaven first; and then, the person.—*R. Baxter.*

V. 22.—*The light of the body, &c.* A great part of wisdom consists in knowing how to make a right estimate of things. 2 Cor. iv. 18.—*C. Howe.*

All our actions and all our designs must take such different directions, accordingly as we cherish, or reject the hope of Eternity, that it is impossible to act, or determine rightly, unless we regulate our conduct and decisions by a continual reference to this main and primary question.—*Pascal.*

V. 25.—I was sent into the world to provide for my soul. Indeed, God hath also committed to me the care of my body; but, as one happily expresses it, with this difference. A master commits two things unto a servant—the child, and the child's clothes. Will the master thank the servant, if he plead; "I have kept the clothes, but I have neglected the life of the child?"—*Flavel.*

V. 26.—*The fowls of the air.* Nothing so high, that it is above His command ; nothing so low, that is beneath His Providence. x. 28–30.—*Corbet.*

Who blusheth not to hear the birds every morning, how sweetly and solemnly they sing out their praise unto God, and is so dull himself, as not to do the like ? Ps. civ. 12, 24.—*S. Ambrose.*

V. 31.—I have often thought it a great blessing to mankind, that God hath concealed future events from us ; especially, such things, as concern our own condition. But it is of no purpose that God hath done this, if we will disquiet ourselves with the fears and anxieties of to-morrow, without knowing what they will be. Gen. xii. 10–14 ; and xiii. 36–38.—*Dean Sherlock.*

V. 32.—It is not so much general notions of Providence, which are our best support ; but a sense of the personal interest, if I may so speak, taken in our welfare by Him, who died and rose again. x. 30 ; S. John xiv. 1.—*Dr. Arnold.*

V. 33.—If you have a concern for the things, that are God's, He will also be careful of thee and thine. Ps. xci. 14–16.—*Abp. Leighton.*

If you constantly make the best use of the present hour, you are sure to be prepared for those, which shall follow.—*Fenelon.*

V. 34.—*Take no thought, &c.* Were it not for the hope of a Blessed immortality, man were of all creatures the most miserable ; for his very reason, by which he is capable of a larger happiness, doth most commonly, in this

life, prove an instrument of grief and vexation to him. 1 Cor. xv. 19.—*Dr. John Scott.*

These most comfortable sentences are our bills of exchange, on the credit of which we lay down our cares, and receive provision for our need. 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; 1 S. Pet. iv. 19.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

I know but one way of fortifying my soul against all gloomy presages and terrors of mind ; and that is, by securing to myself the friendship and protection of that Being, who disposes of events and governs futurity. He sees at one view the whole thread of my existence ; not only that part of it, which I have already passed through, but that, which runs forward into all the depths of Eternity. When I lay myself down to sleep, I recommend myself to His care ; when I awake, I give myself up to His direction. Though I know neither the time nor the manner of the death I am to die, I am not at all solicitous about it ; because I am sure that He knows them both, and that He will not fail to comfort and support me under them. Isa. xi. 27-31 ; Ps. xci. and xxiii.—*Addison.*

CHAPTER VII.

VERSE 1.—It behoves us ever to bear in mind, that, while *actions* are always to be judged by the immutable standard of right and wrong, the judgments, which we pass upon *men*, must be qualified by the considerations of age, country, situation, and other incidental circumstances. And it will then be found that he, who is most charitable in his judgment, is generally the least unjust. Col. iii. 12–14.—*Dr. Southey*.

V. 3.—Whenever I spy a fault in another, I am determined to look for two in myself; and they will not be far to seek. Ps. cxxxix. 19–24.—*Adam*.

V. 4.—Conscience is the eye of the soul. Now tenderness is a disposition very proper to the eye; it is the tenderest part of the whole body; and, if the conscience be right, that is so of the soul. The smallest spill or mote is restless agony to the eye; it never fails to force out tears, both to bewail the torment, and to wash away the cause. Our Saviour calls a sin of the least size or guilt, a *mote*; things, that should make the conscience as restless, fret it into lamentings, prick passages for repenting sorrow. Acts ii. 37.—*Dr. Allestry*.

V. 5.—He cannot be a bold reprover, who is not a conscientious one. Such a one must speak softly, for fear of awaking his own guilty conscience. Every one desires, if he must be smitten, that it may be by “the hand of the righteous.” Ps. cxli. 5; xxiii. 23; S. John vii. 19; viii. 1–11; S. Luke xvii. 3.—*Gurnall*.

V. 6.—This verse qualifies the prohibition, apparently so absolute at v. i. Without some *judgment* we cannot know, who are the *dogs*, and who are the *swine* (Comp v. 15). It is needless, rash, censorious, proud, uncharitable judgment, that is forbidden. We may mark the tares in the field of Christ's Church for our edification ; but we must not rudely pull them up to their destruction. Bengelius put this with his usual point and precision ; " Refrain from judging, that is, without knowledge, without charity, without necessity. Still, a dog must pass for a dog, and swine for swine." iii. 7 ; Tit. i. 12.—*J. Ford.*

As the blood of the Paschal lamb was not to be spilt on an Israelite's door (where it might be trampled on), but on the side-posts ; so neither is the Blood of Christ to be applied to the believer himself, while he lies in any sin unrepented of, for his present comfort. 1 S. John i 7 ; Isa. i. 6, 18—" Come now."—*Gurnall.*

O Lord God, shine with Thy light into our hearts, that we may know the inestimable worth of Thy *pearl* (xiii. 45), and how low is the price Thou dost require of us. Add this to Thy mercies, O Lord, that the precious pearl be not shewn and exhibited to us in vain. And Thou, that didst forbid us to *cast pearls before swine*, Oh, grant by Thy grace, that, though we have been sometimes so like the swine, as not to know the worth of Thy pearl, but to prefer acorns and husks before it, yet, now enlightened, and better taught of God, we may so well understand ourselves and Thy pearl, as most earnestly to covet it, and gladly to purchase it with all we have. Isa. xxvi. 13 ; Phil. iii. 7-12.—*Bellarmino.*

V. 7.—*Ask*, as a beggar ; *seek*, as a merchant for pearls (v. 6) ; *knock*, as a lost traveller.—*J. Ford*.

V. 8.—God does not delay to hear our prayers, because He has no mind to give ; but that, by enlarging our desires, He may give us more largely. Ps. lxxxi. 10.—*Anselm*.

V. 9.—*A serpent*, lest it should hurt *us* ; a *stone*, lest unhappily we should hurt *others*.—*Dean Boys*.

V. 11.—It merits observation that in the Sermon on the Mount God is called our *Father* no less than fifteen times. What an introduction to the Gospel ! What a prelude to the gift of the Spirit of adoption and grace ! S. Luke i. 74 ; Rom. viii. 15.—*J. Ford*.

V. 12.—*Therefore* here stands parallel with *For*, in the fourteenth verse of the last Chapter. In both places, they relate to the duty of Prayer, shewing us how indispensably necessary Charity is, in order to the right performance of that duty. All our happiness depends upon prayer ; all our prayer depends upon Charity. Pour into our hearts, good Lord, this “most excellent gift.” vi. 12 ; Isa. i. 15 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 1 ; 1 Tim. ii. 8.—*J. Ford*.

V. 14.—If I am seeking everything, that can delight my senses and regale my appetite, spending my time and fortune in pleasures, in diversion, and worldly enjoyments, a stranger to watchings, fastings, prayers, and mortifications, how can it be said, that I am “working out my salvation with fear and trembling” ? Phil. ii. 12. If there is nothing in my life and conversation, that shows me to be different from Jews and heathens ; if I use the world and worldly enjoyments, as the generality of

people now do, and in all ages have done, why should I think that I am amongst those *few*, who are walking in the narrow way to heaven? v. 47; Titus ii. 14.—*Wm. Law.*

V. 17.—For, as the good fruit is not the cause, that the tree is good, but the tree must first be good, before it can bring forth good fruit; so the good deeds of men are not the cause, that maketh men good; but he is first made good by the Grace and Spirit of God, that effectually worketh in him; and afterward he bringeth forth good fruits. And then, as the good fruit doth argue the goodness of the tree, so doth the good deed of the man argue and certainly prove the goodness of him, that doth it, according to the saying, "*Ye shall know them by their fruits.*"—*Homilies.*

V. 24.—The parallel (S. Luke vi. 48), where the words *cometh unto Me* are inserted, indicates clearly the *foundation* of faith—"the receiving the Lord Jesus," as our Prophet, our Priest, and our King; which is the only basis, on which *good* works can be built. In regard to the house also, S. Luke records the expression of *digging deep*, omitted here; a phrase, which mightily adds to the force and meaning of the comparison, and harmonizes with those other terms in the Scripture—"strive," "give all diligence," "work out," "labour." Would we lay to heart some leading particulars, in respect of which, at the last awful Day, we shall be found to have *done* or *not done these sayings* of our Lord, we possess a strict and a sure guide to our self-examination in this Sermon, and also in His tremendous account of the proceedings of that Day in ch. xxv. 31-46; Eph. ii. 20; iii. 17; Acts iv. 12; 1 Cor. ii. 11.—*J. Ford.*

V. 28.—The splendour of the *Beatitudes* shines forth in the Blessed Passion of our Lord, which is properly their foundation and origin. For who is “*poor in spirit*,” unless Christ naked upon the cross? Who is “*meek*,” unless He, who was led, as a sheep, to the slaughter, and who, as a lamb, opened not His mouth? Who “*mourns*,” unless He, who with a great cry and tears offered up supplication for His enemies, who lamented for our sins, and had compassion on our miseries? Who “*hungered and thirsted after righteousness*,” unless Christ upon the cross, satisfying for our sins, and thirsting for the salvation of our souls? Who is “*merciful*,” unless that Samaritan, who bore our infirmities upon His own body? Where is “*cleanness of heart*” seen, unless in Him, who cleanses our hearts with His most precious Blood. Who is “*pacific*,” unless He, who is “our Peace,” and hath reconciled us to God by His Blood? Who “*suffers persecution, for the sake of righteousness*,” unless He, who was crucified by the Jews, against whom men blasphemed, and bare lying testimony?—*Bonaventura*.

V. 29.—He spake, as one, who had power to command and enjoin the heart. Who could look into man, but the Maker of man? Who could enjoin a Law to man’s thoughts, but He, which “knew their thoughts?” S. John ii. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 11.—*Sutton*.

The Scribes failed, first, in the *matter*; they delivered not the doctrine of God: secondly, in the *manner*; they taught coldly and without zeal: thirdly, in the *end*; they taught in pride and ambition, seeking themselves and not God’s glory.—*Edw. Leigh*.

CHAPTER VIII

VERSE 1.—*When He was come down.* From the Mount of Heaven into this valley of earth, as a physician to cure our leprosy. Or, from the mount of the Law to the plain of the Gospel; or, from the mount of contemplation unto the field of action: or, He came down from the mountain, first instructing His disciples and after descending to the capacities of the people; teaching all teachers hereby to deliver high points unto the learned, and plain principles to the simple. Heb. v. 12-14.—*Dean Boys.*

If we may here indulge in metaphor, it may be said, that our Lord *descended from the Mount*, when He ceased from the delivery of Heavenly doctrine and began to work miracles, an evidence suited to the plainest minds (1 Cor. xiv. 22). But, in truth, His performance of miracles came most appropriately after the preaching of the Gospel, as an outward attestation to it, and as the miracles themselves, in their specific character of *mercifulness*, harmonized with the doctrines delivered.—Mark xvi. 20; 1 Th. i. 5.—*J. Ford.*

V. 6.—*Lord, my servant, &c.* Josh. xxiv. 15, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." This ought to be the sincere resolution and godly practice of every Christian Master of a family. Without this, none can reasonably expect to have dutiful children or faithful servants, nor justly hope to have God's Blessing. Gen. xvii. 23; xviii. 19; Acts x. 1, 2.—*Bp. Wilson.*

V. 7.—Consider the humility of our Lord, who offered to go Himself to the servant, but refused the pomp of the nobleman (S. John iv. 46). Consider also, that we ought not to accept persons ; for our Lord without any great requiring, went to heal the soldier's servant, and refused to go to the Prince's son, though earnestly prayed and entreated thereto ; thereby to reprove the pride of many, who run with speed to rich men's houses to please them and to do them all possible service, in hope of some worldly reward and favour ; but are slack to go unto those, that are poor and needy, to assist and succour them in their necessities, only in hope of a reward in heaven. S. James ii. 1-4 ; Prov. iv. 20.—*Bonaventura*.

V. 8.—By pronouncing himself unworthy he made himself worthy of receiving the Word of God ; I say not into his house, but into his heart. Nor would he have uttered this with so great faith and humility, unless in his heart he had borne that Saviour, whom he scrupled to admit under his roof.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 10.—Unbelief is now so universally common, that it is a matter of *marvel* to find any man, who can fully trust God, even in the lesser operations of His hand. But the real *marvel* ought rather to be, not as Christ said to this Centurion, to find a person who believes, but to find a person, who does not. S. John xii. 37 ; xiv. 9 ; Isa. liii. 1.—*Segneri*.

Though the persons who approached our Lord manifested a variety of different virtues, yet *faith* is the only grace, which He is wont to commend. Luke vii. 50 ; Heb. xi. —*Bengel*.

V. 12.—*Children of the Kingdom*, rather than of the *King*; since many are in the Kingdom, whom notwithstanding the King rejects as traitors: whereas all the children of the King are adopted as co-heirs with His only-begotten Son. Rom. ix. 6; xi. 1-6.—*Beza*.

Notice the distinction: that Ruler (S. John iv. 46) “besought the Lord to come down to his house;” this Centurion professed his unworthiness of such an honour. To him it was replied, “I will come and heal him;” to the former, “Go; thy son liveth.” In one case, He promised a visit; in the other, He healed with a word. And yet the Ruler almost forced Him to come to his house; whereas the Centurion pleaded his unworthiness. Here the cure is conceded to boldness; there it is granted to humility.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 14.—*He saw Peter's wife's mother*. The ancients observe, that in three of the miracles, performed by Jesus after His Sermon on the Mount, the three kinds of God's benefits are represented to us—first, of those, which are bestowed upon us, on our suing to God for them ourselves, as in the case of the leper; secondly, of those, which are obtained for us by the prayers of others (the Centurion's servant); and the third, of those, which God confers, out of His own free mercy, without any prayer of ours: to which kind of mercy the Apostles very justly refer the calling of the Gentiles. Isa. lxiii. 7.—*Grotius*.

It appears that He entered Peter's house for the sake of some necessary refreshment, as it is recorded that Peter's wife's mother, immediately on her recovery, *ministered* unto them. This latter circumstance not only shews the completeness of the cure, a fever generally

leaving the patient exceedingly weak, but it helps us to remark how our Blessed Lord preferred relieving others to the supply of His own wants. The case of the woman of Samaria offers a remarkable counterpart to this incident; only hers was a higher, a spiritual cure. S. John iv. 6, 7, 31, 32, 34.—*J. Ford.*

V. 16.—Oh, that such a Saviour should live in heaven, so able, so wise, so gracious, and men not be persuaded to put themselves into His hands!—*J. Milner.*

V. 20.—Who can now complain of want, when he hears his Lord and Saviour but thus provided for? He could have brought down with Him a celestial house, and have pitched it here below, too glorious for earthen eyes to have looked upon it; He could have commanded all the precious things, that lie shrouded in the bowels of the earth, to have made up a Majestical palace for Him, to the dazzling of the eyes of all beholders; He could have taken up the stateliest court, that any earthly Monarch possessed, for His peculiar habitation. But His straitness was spiritual and heavenly; and He, that owned all, would have nothing; that He might sanctify want unto us, and that He might teach us by His blessed example to sit down contented with anything, with nothing. xxvii. 34.—*Bp. Hall.*

The foxes, &c. Mighty Lord, who wast thus rejected that we might live, teach us to understand and feel this mystery of woe. Teach us to love what thou hast made Thine own; to honour the misery, which Thou hast selected; to look with respect and awe upon the Christian poverty, whose sorrows whisper to us of Thine. v. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 9.—*W. Archer Butler.*

V. 21.—What plea seems in our eyes more reasonable, more amiable, more dutiful, more necessary? But would it stand the test, would it bear the gaze of that Infinite eye, “from which no secrets are hid?” Alas! there might have existed, under this specious plea, the most self-interested covetousness. Rom. ii. 16.—*J. Ford.*

V. 22.—We must bid all things stand aside, that would impede us, and tell them, that they have no interest at all in us, when we are in pursuit of so great a good; the love of which will soon reconcile us to the hardest duties and endear to us the most self-denying courses. It will alter the countenance of sufferings and make all the troubles of this life cast a kinder aspect on us. Nay, it will enable us to look death in the face with a cheerful heart; for it will present it to us in another shape, and make the grave, that house of darkness, seem like the Beautiful gate of the Temple of God. Neh. vi. 3; John iv. 32–34.—*Bp. Patrick.*

V. 23.—Christ entering into the ship, His *disciples followed Him*, leaving the others upon the land. They are the true disciples of Jesus, who not only keep Him company upon the land, that is to say, whilst things succeed with them prosperously; but also go with Him into the sea, to wit, amidst the storms and tribulations of this life; for no good Christian can pass this life without he suffer some affliction. S. John xi. 16; S. Luke xxii. 28; 2 Tim. iv. 10.—*Bonaventura.*

V. 24.—As long as things prosper around us in the world, we look not to the Lord. The Apostles, while the sea was calm, paid so little regard to our Lord, that they

left Him to fall *asleep* by Himself in the vessel ; but, no sooner did the tempest begin to rage, than they cried out to Him for deliverance. Ps. xxx. 6-8.—*Segneri*.

V. 25.—Prayer is the application of want to Him, who can alone relieve it ; the voice of sin to Him, who can alone pardon it. It is not eloquence, but earnestness ; not the definition of helplessness, but the feeling of it ; not figures of speech, but compunctions of soul ; it is the cry of Faith to the ear of Mercy.—*H. More*.

V. 27.—How much more should we wonder at all disobedient Christians, saying, “ What manner of men are these, who refuse obedience unto Him, whom the senseless creatures, the winds and the sea, obeyed ? Isa. i. 3 ; Acts xix. 13 ; Phil. ii. 9, 10.—*Bp. Pearson*.

V. 28.—*So that no man, &c.* Observe how the devils had stopped the way of those, who were coming to Christ, and had forbidden access to Him. For this is the special business of devils to prevent man from finding the means of returning to God ; because their only way of enjoying uninterrupted possession of man is by withdrawing him from the presence of his Creator. xiii. 19 ; Luke ix. 42.—*Pet. Chrysologus*.

V. 32.—Our Lord's Divine power to save was shown in miracles of *mercy* ; His power to destroy, in miracles of *destruction*. The former miracles were numberless ; of the latter we have only two instances ; here in the destruction of the temple, and at ch. xxi. in the blasting of the temple, in this life, is “ His strange work,” which is more willing to save than to destroy. (17 ; 2 Peter iii. 9). And

what else are these two instances of His power to destroy, than gracious warnings to the impenitent and to the unclean? Neither in them did He do any wrong; for the fig tree being barren was of no value; and the Gadarene traffic in swine was illegal. "Whoso is wise will consider these things; and they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." Ps. cvii. 43; Acts x. 38; Rom. iii. 4.—*J. Ford.*

V. 34.—*When they saw Him*; that he was a poor, plain, unpretending person, "having no form, nor comeliness, nor any beauty, that they should desire Him;" and, much less, any worldly power or grandeur to help them, they rejected Him. So, on the other hand, when Laban *saw* the earrings and bracelets upon his sister's hands, he kindly received the servant of Abraham. These are exquisite natural traits of the effects of avarice in worldly minds. Gen. xxiv. 30; 1 Kings x. 5.—*J. Ford.*

Oh, what feebleness of mind does it discover to be insensible to the misery of being "without God in the world." Nothing more clearly proves a native baseness of spirit, than not to desire the accomplishment of Eternal promises; nothing can be more cowardly than to affect bravery by defying God. Prov. i. 1-7.—*Pascal.*

The contempt of Mercy is one of the highest aggravations of guilt. And nothing can be more just, than that He should have *judgment without mercy*, who refuses even to accept of mercy, who will shew no mercy; no, not even to himself.—Prov. i. 24-32.—*Wogan.*

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 1.—He is said to have come *into His own city*. Not Nazareth, where He was born, (bred ?) but Capernaum, where He *dwelt* and *preached*, is called *His own city*. Thou art not a Christian, because thou wast born in a Christian kingdom, and born within the Covenant, and born of Christian parents, but because thou hast dwelt in the Christian Church and performed the duties presented to thee there. iii. 9 ; xii. 46–50 ; Rom. ii. 28, 29. —*Dr. Donne*.

Seeing their faith (as seen in their works of love).—Quicken, O Lord, our half-dead spirits into a lively and active zeal of bringing others to Thee (Numb. x. 29 ; John i. 29–41), and touch their hearts with the same affection to us ; that by our mutual charity we may obtain Thy pardon and taste the joys of a peaceful conscience. Let us not faint at the first encounter (Mark ii. 4), nor quit our pious purpose for a little pains ; but wisely cast about to overcome the difficulty and try all possible ways to attain our end.—*Austin*.

V. 4.—Here is the great point of self-denial, to deny our *thoughts*, and turn them from objects, to which they incline, to others. This is the true source of mortification : get the mastery of these, and you command all the rest.—*Bonnell*.

V. 6.—By saying that sins are forgiven us *on earth*, our Lord reminds us that after death there is no more place for repentance and forgiveness ; for then the door is shut. v. 25, 26.—*Theophylact*.

V. 7.—We are naturally palsied, and lame, and halt with sin : but when Jesus says to us, “ Repent, and your sins shall be forgiven,” we are strengthened and encouraged to arise, and walk in the paths of righteousness. We leave our burden of sin behind us, and *take up our bed* and carry it along with us ; that is, in our duty we find our rest.—*A. W. Hare*.

If the Lord possessed this *power on earth to forgive sins*, as He was the Son of man, in great humility, before the Sacrifice of His death for sin was offered, how much more may our faith rest on Him for pardon now, when He is the Glorified Son both of God and of man, and exalted to the right hand of the Father ; yea, exalted for the very express purpose of “ giving repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins ?” xviii. 18 ; Acts v. 31 ; Rom. viii. 33, 34.—*J. Ford*.

V. 10.—S. Matthew leaves out the story of his own feasting of Christ (only as Christ *sat at meat in the house*) which S. Luke sets down exactly. “ And Levi made Him a great feast.” S. Luke v. 27.—*Dr. Hammond*.

Matthew’s house and his “ great feast” show that the receipt of custom was not an unprofitable business ; and that He had much to forsake for Christ’s sake. S. Luke xix. 2, 8. Acts xix. 25.—*J. Ford*.

S. Paul allows Christians to accept the hospitable invitations of their heathen neighbours, and contents himself with only prescribing some rules for their conduct, while

in such society. We profess not absolutely to renounce the world, but the *pomps* and *vanities* of this *wicked* world ; and certainly by means of our kind, prudent, and consistent demeanour towards the ungodly we may do them the greatest good ; and that, perhaps, in the only way they will allow us to do so. S. Luke vii. 36 ; 1 Cor. x. 29.—*J. Ford.*

V. 11.—Though the light shines on things unclean, yet it is not thereby defiled.—*S. Augustine.*

The society of evil persons tends, in a certain way, to refine the good. xiii. 30 ; Ezek. xviii. 14.—*S. Gregory.*

V. 12.—He calls those *whole* and *righteous*, who “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God ;” (Rom. x. iii.) who, presuming upon their punctual fulfilment of the Law, reject the grace of the Gospel. (Rev. iii. 17.) Again, He calls those *sick* and *sinners*, who, subdued under a deep sense of their weakness and conscious of their inability to justify themselves by the Law, bow the neck in true repentance to the Grace of Christ.—*Bede.*

The righteousness, which the Jews sought from the Law, was not so much the righteousness of the Law, as their own ; not such as God demanded of them, but such as they had foolishly imagined for themselves, the fiction of their own foolish brain. This S. Paul properly calls a righteousness “of their own,” opposed to the righteousness of God. Rom. x. 3 ; Titus ii. 5.—*Bp. Bull.*

It is Satan’s policy to crack the breast-plate of thy own righteousness, by beating it out further, than the metal will bear. Job. xxxiii. 9 ; xxxiv. 5 ; xxxv. 1.—*Gurnall.*

V. 13.—The Lord does not here reject the truly righteous, but the proud. He condemns those, who boast that they are righteous, when they are really not. Luke xvi. 15.—*Pet. Chrysologus.*

None are more incurable than they, who deem themselves *whole*. 2 Tim. iii. 5 ; John ix. 39–41.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 15.—*When I shall be taken from them* in body, and shall send them My Holy Spirit to strengthen and prepare them for hard service, *then they shall fast*, and perform those parts of more difficult obedience unto Me. Phil. iv. 13.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 17.—Few acts require more caution and more consultation with experienced advisers, than the resolving upon a private system of fasting. We have seen (ch. iv. 2, 3) that fasting was the occasion of trial, even to our Lord Himself. Surely the same tempter will try to ensnare us also in a like manner. Let therefore the novice in religion beware, and consider the good advice of Bp. J. Taylor ; “ Be not slow in common and usual acts of piety and devotion, and quick and prompt at singularities ; but, having first done what thou art bound to, proceed to counsels, and perfections, and the extraordinaries of religion, as you see cause.” iv. 2, 3 ; Prov. iv. 24–27 ; xxiv. 27.—*J. Ford.*

V. 18.—*My little daughter.* Mark v. 22. Life is but a play upon this world’s stage ; and, if a man were to choose his part, in discretion he would not take it for the length, but for the ease and goodness. The short life has the shorter *Audit* to make ; and if it be one of the greatest felicities, that can befall man, to be in such a

condition as he may not displease God, surely then soon to enter upon death is best. . . . Death to a righteous man, whether it cometh soon or late, is the beginning of a certain happiness, the end but of a doubtful and allayed pleasure. I will not much care whether my life be long or short. If short, the fewer my days be, the less I shall have of trouble, the sooner shall I arrive at happiness ; if long, let me be sure to lay it out in doing the more good. —*O. Feltham.*

Death is always armed with a *sword* and a *bow*. (Ps. vii. 13.) With his sword he strikes the aged, who cannot ward it off ; he strikes the timid and the infirm : but with his bow he strikes the young, who presumptuously hope to make their escape.—*Segneri.*

V. 22.—Here are set down three notable effects of a lively faith. It maketh us the children of God ; *Daughter*. (Gal. iii. 26). It bringeth comfort ; *Be of good cheer*. (Rom. v. 1, 2.) It procures Salvation of body and soul ; *Thy faith hath made thee whole*. Acts iii. 16.—*Dean Boys.*

V. 24.—Our Lord in this miracle, did His utmost to lower in the minds of the parents any sense of their obligation to Him for the kindness, which He designed to show them. He prepared it by a kind of Divine equivoque ; *The maid is not dead, but sleepeth*. What ! *sleepeth* ! Would not any man possessing the power, that Christ had, have done just the contrary ? It is pretty evident, that any other person would, first, place beyond all doubt the fact of her being dead. He would have addressed the bystanders to this effect. “Draw near, pay attention ; mark well, if she retains in her any symptoms of life.

Feel her pulse, if it beats ; feel her heart, if it moves ; observe her eyes, if they have any animation ; take notice, if you can observe the least breath playing on her lips ; make yourselves quite sure that she is really cold, stiffened, discoloured, and all over of a deadly pale." Thus, in order to blazon forth to the utmost his intended act of kindness, he would, it seems, have been at the greatest pains to make them feel their absolute need of his help. But Christ did no such thing. He would have it appear that He was doing nothing more, than banishing sleep from the eyes of the slumbering damsel ; that by this means He might, I think, put to shame those persons, who arrogate to themselves so much praise for their insignificant services ; whereas He lessened the immensity of His benefits by His modest way of conferring them. ix. 6 ; Heb. iii. 4 ; S. Luke vii. 15 ; S. Mark v. 19.—*Segneri*.

Sleep is death's younger brother, and so like him, that I never dare trust him without my prayer. Ps. iv. 9.—*Sir T. Brown*.

V. 30.—The Lord from *humility* shunning the fame of His glorious works, gave them this charge ; and they from *gratitude* cannot be silent respecting so great a benefit. xiii. 34 ; Acts iv. 20.—*S. Chrysostom*.

V. 34.—There is no readier way for a man to bring his own worth into question, than by endeavouring to detract from the worth of other men. S. John ix. 28–32.—*Abp. Tillotson*.

If I am weak in body, Christ, my Head, was "wounded ;" if weak in mind, Christ, my Head, was

"heavy unto death." If I suffer in my estate, Christ, my Head, "became poor," as poor as a servant; if in my name, Christ, my Head, was "esteemed vile," vile as Beelzebub.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 36.—*Moved with compassion.* We see here that the misery, which peculiarly excited the compassion of our gracious Lord, was not that of men's bodies, though he came in contact with *every sickness and every disease*, but of their souls. "Let this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus." For, until we make this true account of the comparative worth of soul and body, we shall never pray, as we ought, that *the Lord would send forth labourers into His harvest*," the harvest of His chief joy. Isa. liii. 11; Luke xv. 6–9.—*J. Ford.*

V. 38.—In this act of *sending forth labourers* upon the work of the Gospel, the Holy Ghost is proved to be *the Lord of the harvest*, to whom Christ Himself has directed us to pray. Acts xiii. 2–4; xvi. 6, 7–10; Jerem. iii. 15.—*W. Jones.*

If we neglect prayer to God, how can we expect a godly Pastor? "Whosoever thou art," (writes *Hooker* quoting S. Gregory) "whom the inconvenience of an evil Governor doth press, accuse thyself, and not him: his being such is thy deserving." Jer. iii. 14, 15.—*J. Ford.*

'Tis not a man's skill in State affairs, that makes him an Ambassador, or ability in the law, that makes him a Magistrate; but their call to their places: neither do gifts make a man a Minister, but his *Mission*. Rom. x. 15.—*Gurnall.*

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 1.—The ancients have much extolled the Apostolical dignity. Some styled these Twelve, the feet of Christ, because they, as it were, carried Christ up and down the world ; others, the very eyes of God, they were His watchmen, that took care for the concernments of His Name and Gospel in the world ; others, the breasts of the Church ; they fed and nourished the children of God by their doctrine. xix. 28 ; Rom. x. 15 ; 1 Cor. iii. 2 ; Rev. xxi. 10–14.—*Flavel*.

V. 2.—Christ loves not *singularity* ; He called not *one* alone. He loves not *schism* either between them, whom He calls : and therefore He calls persons likely to agree, “two brethren.” So He began to build the Synagogues, to establish that first government in Moses and Aaron, “brethren ;” so he begins to build the Church, in Peter and Andrew, “brethren.” The principal fraternity and brotherhood, that God respects, is spiritual, (xviii. 19,) brethren in the profession of the same true religion. Ex. iv. 14 ; Eccl. iv. 9, 10.—*Dr. Donne*.

Single endeavours seldom prosper : many hands make the work both quick and sure. They can be no friends to the happy estate of a family, or Church, that labour to cause distractions. Division makes certain way to ruin. S. Luke x. 1 ; Acts xi. 30 ; xiii. 2 ; xv. 2, 39, 40.—*Bp. Hall*.

V. 5.—At our Ordination, as Priests, we receive a general *Commission* to “preach the Word ;” but, after-

wards, by the wise restraints of Ecclesiastical discipline, and under the salutary control of his Bishop, a particular part of the vineyard is assigned to each Minister. This latter is his *Mission* ; and happy is he, if found continually watching for the souls, thus individually, as well as authoritatively, committed to his care. 1 Cor. xiv. 33 ; 2 Cor. x. 13-18 ; Gal. ii. 7-9.—*J. Ford.*

V. 6.—It is true, our Saviour had a peculiar Kingdom in this world, that is, the Jewish Church, not only before His Ascension, but before His Incarnation ; but, as for that right of dominion over the Gentile world too, by which He became Universal Lord and King, He was not invested with it 'till His Ascension into Heaven. xv. 24 ; xxviii. 18, 19 ; Acts ii. 33 ; Eph. iv. 8.—*Dr. John Scott.*

V. 8.—*Heal the sick.* Men will never believe, that we really intend the good of their souls, if they do not find, that we endeavour to do them good, disinterestedly, in temporal things. S. John iv. 15.—*Th. Scott.*

How is it, that the common-sense view of Christian Missions, on the principle of acting first on men's secondary motives by relieving their temporal distresses, and as that principle is sanctioned by the practice of Christ and His Apostles, has so much been lost sight of in the foreign operations of our Church ? Of all human qualifications for a Missionary's Divine work, I should say that the knowledge of medicine was the most likely, under God's blessing, to prove useful "to the furtherance of that Gospel," which is the healing of men's souls. Col. iv. 14 ; 2 Cor. viii. 18.—*J. Ford.*

Freely ye have received, &c. Observe, how He is as careful that they should be upright in moral virtue, as that they should have the miraculous powers; shewing that miracles without these are naught. *Freely ye have received*, seems a check upon their pride; *freely give*, a command to keep themselves pure from filthy lucre. 2 Cor. vi. 3, 4; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 11.—Be good yourself, and you will be sure to find out good people.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 13.—*If it be not worthy.* As the dove returned to the Ark again, when it found the earth under water, so doth the Spirit of God carry His comfort back with him again into heaven from a soul in the suds of sin, soaking in its abominations. Where can this Heavenly Dove find rest for the sole of His foot in such a soil? And will He speak peace to that soul, in which Himself can find no rest? vii. 6; Amos iii. 3; 2 Cor. vi. 14.—*Gurnall.*

Let your peace return to you. How true it is, that, as in God's material, so in His spiritual world, nothing can be lost. Here is a consolation for Ministers at the time, when they most need it, when their spirits faint, when their hearts are well nigh broken under failures, and disappointments, and "the contradiction of sinners." *They* receive the Blessing from the Lord, which *others* refused. It reverts to them. For, even as the snow and rain in the natural world, so in the spiritual the Word of the Lord shall "accomplish that, which He pleases and prosper in the thing, whereto He has sent it." Isa. lv. 10, 11; Prov. xl. 25.—*J. Ford.*

V. 14.—'Tis in vain for men to turn away their thoughts from this Eternity, which awaits them, as if they were able to destroy it by denying it a place in their imagination. It subsists, in spite of *them*; it advanceth unobserved; and Death, which is to draw the curtain from it, will in a short time infallibly reduce them to the dreadful necessity of being for ever nothing, (as they indeed fancy), or for ever miserable. Isa. xxviii. 15–18; Amos ix. 9, 10.—*Pascal*.

V. 16.—*Sheep* are of a very harmless and inoffensive nature. "What the dove is among birds, the same is the sheep among cattle;" saith S. Chrysostom. And such must Christians be, endued with dove-like simplicity, and with lamb-like innocency. Isa. lxxv. 25.—*Bp. Brownrig*.

To combine the simplicity of children with the wisdom of age is a rare and precious gift.—*Bp. Medley*.

V. 17.—Thus transformed and brutified, that smiling friend may be a tempter; he, that calls himself a Saint, may be a seducer; his oily tongue may wound thee, his embrace crush thee to pieces: that demure countenance may shadow a legion of devils. Look not upon his phylacteries; the man's a Pharisee: and this Angel-keeper may be thy murderer. xxii. 15, 16; 2 Cor. xi. 14. *Farindon*.

V. 22.—*Ye shall be hated, &c.* *Suffering* sometimes becomes, as a reward for *doing*. You read of the heifers, which brought home the Ark out of the Philistine's country, that, when they brought the Ark home, the Israelites took the heifers and offered them up to God, as a sacrifice. (1 Sam. vi. 14.) "Why so?" saith one. "It is an ill

requital to the heifers." No : the heifers could not have so high an honour put upon them. 1 Pet. ii. 19-21 ; Phil i. 29 ; Acts ix. 16 ; xxi. 13.—*Wm. Bridge.*

V. 23.—That man cannot be said by his fleeing to "deny" Christ, who only flees, lest he should deny Him. ii. 12, 20 ; S. John x. 13, 14 ; 2 Tim. iv. 10.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 26.—*There is nothing, &c.* In due time your godly sincerity and truth in preaching the Gospel shall be acknowledged by the world. 1 Cor. iv. 1-5.—*Isid. Clarius.*

We are soon to go off the stage to a region of peace and love, where malice and envy cannot follow us. He, to whom our integrity is known, will pardon all our frailties, and even all our omissions, and will deal with us according to our sincere endeavours ; from whose hands we may expect to receive the more entire reward, the less we have received from men. Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6 ; lxii. 5 ; 2 Thess. i. 4-7.—*Bp. Burnet.*

V. 28.—Pardon me, Emperor ; you only threaten me with a prison ; but God threatens me with Hell. Isa. li. 7, 8, 12 ; Heb. xi. 23, 27.—*A Primitive Martyr.*

If man hate and God love, man kill the body and God bring both body and soul to Eternal Life, the exchange is good and profitable. Rom. viii. 18.—*Bp. Hooper.*

V. 29.—Had you heard our Saviour speak after this manner, when as yet His disciples were under no such trials, you would certainly have said within yourself : If these speeches of Jesus are true, and if, according to His

prediction, *Governors and Kings* (verse 18), undertake to ruin and destroy those, who shall profess themselves His disciples ; we will believe (not only that He is a prophet) but that He has received power from God sufficient to preserve and propagate His religion ; and that He would never talk in such a peremptory and discouraging manner, were He not assured that He was able to subdue the most powerful opposition, that could be made against the faith and doctrine, which He taught. xvi. 18 ; xxviii. 20 ; Ps. ii. ; Acts iv. 25-31.—*Addison*.

V. 32.—Some confess, but believe not, as hypocrites : others believe, but confess not, as timorous and Peter-like professors in the days of persecution : others do neither confess, nor believe in Christ, as atheists : others both confess and believe ; and they be true Christians.—*D. Willet*.

V. 34.—*But a sword*. Prejudice gathers every conventicle, moulds every sect, coins every heresy ; and is that sword, which our Saviour speaks of, which makes division of “ a man from his father, and a daughter from her mother,” and makes enemies of those, who are “ of a man’s own household.” Prejudice is that East-wind, which brings in the locusts, which cover the face of the Church, and make it dark, and eat up those fruits of peace and holiness, which otherwise we might gather. S. Luke ii. 34 ; S. John iv. 9.—*Farindon*.

V. 37.—Would God, we would remark it, and remember well, that the bond of “ one God, one Father, one Baptism,” and so forth, is as far above the bond of one father, one mother, and such like, as God is above man, spiritual

things above carnal, and the spirit above the flesh.—Phil. iii. 8–12.—*Bp. Babington.*

V. 38.—We are bid to *take*, not to make our cross. God in His Providence will provide one for us. And we are bid to *take it up*; we hear nothing of laying it down. Our troubles and our lives are coetaneous, live and die together. Here, when joy comes, sorrow is at its heel. “Staff and rod” go together. Ps. xxiii. 14; xxx. 6, 7; ci. 1; Eccl. ii. i; S. John ii. 3.—*Gurnall.*

V. 41.—When men really love God, they will honour Him in His Ministers. They, that do not do so, do not consider that prejudices easily pass from the persons to the Truths they preach, and to the Ordinances they administer. Who does not see the fatal consequence? The sins, committed against God’s Ministers, are not generally understood; they have a peculiar guilt in them; for they, that despise them, dishonour Him, that sends them, even Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. 3 John 9, 10.—*Bp. Wilson.*

V. 42.—It is usual to take *only* in connection with the *cup of cold water*; but the context seems to justify and to recommend its being taken rather with what follows, *in the name of a disciple*. Now this teaches us a very important lesson, not to have “men’s persons in admiration” (S. Jude 16) but to be kind to them *only* for Christ’s sake; as before, in respect to “a prophet,” it is not to the person, but to the office, “*the name of a prophet*,” we are to have regard, and however unworthy, in himself, of any honour the prophet may be. This is the force of the parallel passage of S. John xiii. 16–20; where reference seems to be made to that most unworthy of Ministers, the traitor Judas.

See Art. xxvi. of the Church. xxiii. 2, 3 ; 1 Th. v. 12, 13 ; 1 Tim. v. 17.—*J. Ford.*

In Christ's true members, Faith sees her Lord, and Love ministers to His necessities. If there be any Universal Virtue, which fills, as it were, all the rest with goodness, and gives them their value and importance, that certainly is Charity, the true love of God and of our neighbour ; from which whatever arises will at least be grateful and pleasing to God, although it should seem otherwise of little value.—*Bp. Bull.*

For "a *cup* of cold water" (the *water*, common element ; and *cold* water, which cost thee not the charge of fire, to warm it,) there is a *torrent*, nay, a very sea of all pleasures provided for thee, for all Eternity. 2 Cor. ix. 8 ; Phil. iv. 19.—*Bp. Andrewes.*

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 2.—When the Pastor is restrained of his liberty, let him not cease to provide for his flock ; when the master of the family cannot come to Church himself, let him send his servants. Eph. iv. 1.—*Dean Boys*.

V. 4.—We can by no means think that John himself doubted, but John's disciples. We trace, then, his charity in sending them to enquire in such manner, as though the doubt were his own. We also have the goodness of the Lord, exercised in the same manner ; so as not to shame and discourage these young tender converts for their unbelief ; for He says, "*Go, and show John.*" Thomas Aquinas well observes on Gen. xviii. 17 ; "God is very backward to expose to the public our secret faults." Finally, we may connect this narrative with another of still deeper import ; observing that while, in this case, Jesus Christ solved the doubt by an appeal to His power over others ; He there referred to His power over His own Body. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "I have power to lay down" my life, "and I have power to take it again." S. John ii. 19 ; x. 18.

V. 5.—*The poor, &c.* The passive verb, in the Greek, signifies not the act of preaching, but *the effect* of the Gospel preached. "The poor are *Evangelized*." Christ's special regard to the destitution of poverty and to the helplessness of childhood, shows His mission to have been Divine, not needing the support of the rich, the mighty,

the noble of this world, whose special favours an impostor doubtless would have supremely courted. The conversion, too, of any one single soul is a proof of the Divine power : this, as a moral evidence, possesses more weight than the attestation borne by external miracles. Ps. lxxii. 1, 2, 4, 12, 13. For, as one says, "God's patience and bountifulness towards us is the greatest miracle." Acts xiii. 12. —*J. Ford.*

V. 6.—If the Religion of Jesus Christ is to be corrected and softened down, 'till it becomes agreeable to the natural thoughts and imaginations of the human heart, then in vain was it said, *Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.* Col. ii. 8, 9 ; 2 Cor. ii. 17 ; Gal. i. 8 ; Rev. xxii. 19.—*W. Jones.*

V. 7.—(When John is put in prison, *then* our Lord praises him.) Faith and friendship are seldom tried, but in extremes. To find friends, when we have no need of them, and to want them, when we have, are both alike easy and common. In prosperity, who will not profess to love a man ? In adversity, how few will show that they do it indeed ? When we are happy in the spring-tide of abundance and the rising flood of plenty, then the world will be our servant ; then all men flock about us with bared heads, with bended bodies, and protesting tongues ; but, when these pleasing waters fall to ebbing, when wealth but shifteth to another stand, *then* men look upon us at a distance, and stiffen themselves, as if they were in armour. . . . The trial of friendship is by finding what *others* will do for us ; but the trial of faith is by seeing what *we* will do for God. Ps. xlix ; 18 ;

Gen. xi. 23 ; Job vi. 15 ; S. Luke xv. 16 ; 2 Tim. iv. 16.

—*O. Feltham.*

More than a Prophet. How so ? He presently gives the reason : because John not only prophesied himself, but was spoken of in prophecy by others.—*Isid. Clavius.*

V. 11.—John stood on a middle ground between the two Covenants. He was equal to any Saint under the Law, but inferior to the least Saint under the Gospel. And why inferior ? Because, for one important reason, he did not live to see the Dispensation of “the fulness” of the Grace of God. Like Moses, he could only speak of a Grace to come, which he himself was not permitted to receive ; namely, that “Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire” poured out on the Church at Pentecost, when the *Kingdom of Heaven* was opened, when the most excellent gift of Regeneration, and of all Heavenly spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus was communicated to those, who believe. iii. 11 ; S. John i. 16, 17, 33 ; Rom. xv. 29 ; Eph. 1. 2, 3 ; 1 S. Peter i. 12.—*J. Ford.*

V. 12.—Not the violent doers, but the sufferers of violence ; for though the old Law was established in the promises of temporal prosperity, yet the Gospel is founded in temporal adversity : it is directly a Covenant of suffering and of sorrows. v. 2–12 ; Zech. xiii. 9 ; Heb. xii. 7.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 15.—Perhaps our Saviour used so frequently to conclude His Divine discourses with that just *Epiphonema* ; “*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,*” to teach us that there is no employment of our faculties, that more deserves their utmost attention, than the scrutiny of Divine truths. Isa. iv. 3 ; Rom. x. 17.—*R. Boyle.*

V. 17.—*We have piped unto you.* I must confess, I think it below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions, as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them.—*Addison.*

I resolve to have innocent mirth, mixed with good discourse, at my table.—*Burkitt.*

His conversation had all the pleasantness of a comedy, and all the usefulness of a Sermon.—*Dr. Rust.* (Fun. Sermon of Bp. J. Taylor.)

V. 18.—*He hath a devil.* Never can you entirely repair the mischief, which you have inflicted by calumny on your neighbour's character. Never can you perfectly restore to him his former good name. You cannot say here, as you may, in regard to a pecuniary damage; "If I have done any wrong to any man, I restore fourfold." (S. Luke xix. 8.) . . . When Moses was desirous of proving his Divine Mission to Pharaoh, he cast his rod before him, and it became a serpent: afterwards the rod returned to its former shape. The magicians of Pharaoh, trying to be even with Moses, cast down their rods, which indeed became serpents, yet never returned to their former shape, but remained serpents still. (Exod. vii. 10-12.) Now listen to the acute observation of Origen upon this incident: "Satanic power was quite unable to make that good again, which from being before good it had once made bad. It could turn the rod into a serpent; but could by no means extract the rod out of the serpent again." Now the same thing will happen to calumniators. You may with a mere trifle make a worthy man look in the eyes of the world like a monstrous serpent: but how

will you manage afterwards wholly to re-invest him with his former good name? Isa. xli. 21-24. —*Segneri*.

V. 20.—We must connive at no evil : every sin unreprieved becomes ours. xiv. 4 ; Ps. l. 18 ; Eph. v. 11.—*Bp. Hall*.

V. 21.—We read of *mighty works done in Chorazin and Bethsaida* ; and yet none of them are recorded, or even elsewhere alluded to, in the Gospels. What a proof have we here of the truth of the seemingly hyperbolical declaration of S. John, with which he emphatically closes his Gospel. (xxi. 25.) None of these miracles might have been recorded, because none produced the designed effect in the conversion of those, who witnessed them ; for miracles were instrumental to faith. iv. 23, 24 ; xi. 5 ; xv. 30.—*J. Ford*.

V. 23.—*Exalted*. (*Mighty works v. 21.*) Sin against God, as He is *Almighty*, is the excess of madness and of folly ; but, as He is most *kind* and *merciful*, it is the basest ingratitude. The greater His goodness, the greater is our guilt, if we be undutiful servants ; and the greater will be our punishment, and that remorse and horror, which S. John in so strong a manner expresses, when he makes the wicked say to the mountains and rocks, “ Fall on us,” &c. (Rev. vi. 16.) He says not from the wrath of the *Lion* (though in the same Book he calls Christ “ The Lion of the tribe of Judah,”) but from the wrath of the *Lamb* ; from long despised patience and much injured mercy. Prov. i. 23-32 ; Isa. lxiii. 7-10 ; Rom. ii. 4, 5. —*Jortin*.

Is there a drop of more exquisite bitterness in the cup of everlasting perdition, than the knowledge how *near* you may have been to the happiness you have lost? S. Mark xii. 34; Acts xxvi. 29.—*W. Archer Butler.*

V. 24.—Height of place gives opportunity of temptation. *They* had need to stand fast, that stand high: there is both more danger of their falling, and more hurt in their fall. iv. 5, 6; xxvi. 69; Isa. xiv. 12.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 25.—There is nothing revealed to us in Holy Scripture, as matter of *opinion*. It is all either matter of faith, or of practice. Ps. xix. 7–14; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.—*Bp. Medley.*

There are, as in philosophy, so in Divinity, sturdy doubts and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which, I confess, I conquered, not in a martial posture, but on my knees. Ps. v. 8; xxv. 13.—*Sir Th. Browne.*

V. 27.—*No man knoweth the Son.* The Divine Nature being removed from human thoughts and discovery, every Religion, which does not confess it to be so, is false; and every Religion, which does not show the reason why it is so, must be barren and unedifying. Our Religion hath performed both parts. Job xi. 7–12; Rom. xi. 33–36.—*Pascal.*

V. 28.—*Come*, for I am “the way;” *learn*, for I am “the Truth;” and *ye shall find rest unto your souls*, for I am “the Life.” S. John xiv. 6.—*Dean Boys.*

A Christian has his joys; but his sorrows are better than joys. Ps. iv. 8.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 29.—*Lowly in heart*.—The first degree of humility, which is humility of *judgment*, was not to be found in Christ, as S. Bernard well observes; because He knew Himself too well to have a mean opinion of Himself, or think Himself contemptible, or judge that He deserved to be despised by all the world (S. John xiii. 1, 8; 13): but the second degree, the true humility of *heart*, was the humility of our Redeemer. He took pleasure in descending and becoming man; He loved to be neglected, and scorned, and ridiculed; He heartily desired to undergo all injuries, insults, and outrages. Behold the example of our Master! See the lesson, which He came to teach us. *Learn of Me; for I am lowly in heart*.—*Rodriguez*.

V. 30.—Oh what a Love was that to mankind, which made such great troubles and miseries seem *light* and *easy*! Gen. xxix. 20; S. Luke xii. 50.—*Bonnell*.

The Gospel is called a *burden* and a *yoke*, lest we presume; yet *light* and *easy*, lest we despair.—*Euthemius*.

O most grateful burden, which more comforts them, that carry it. The burdens of earthly masters gradually wear out the strength of those, who bear them; but the burden of Christ more assists the bearers of it; because we carry not Grace, but Grace us. Isa. lv. 1, 2; Ps. cxix. 32.—*S. Chrysostom*.

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 2.—Surely we Christians may see the reason of our keeping this day far more than any other day ; inasmuch as it is the first of all days, the first day of the Old Creation, and the first day of the New in Christ ; as on this day Christ rose from the grave. On this day, the first day in the beginning, the Light was created. On this day, the first of days, Christ, the true Light the Sun of Righteousness rose from the grave. On this day, the Holy Spirit came down, the true illumination, to fill the New Creation with the light of God. This day, therefore, is beyond all days the day of our Maker, the day of our Redeemer, the day of our Sanctifier. Ps. cxviii. 21–25.
—*Plain Sermons.*

V. 8.—*The Lord of the Sabbath* ; one, “greater than the Temple” (v. 6), one, who was “before Abraham,” one, who was “David’s Lord,” one, who was even “greater than Solomon” (v. 42). How must these titles have sounded in the ears of a bigoted Jew ! What an offence to his national pride !—and to hear them assumed to Himself by the despised Nazarene, “the carpenter’s son !” xiii. 55 ; S. John ix. 58 ; Acts iii. 10–12.—*J. Ford.*

Christ came not to abolish the Sabbath, but to explain and enforce it, as He did the rest of the Law. Its observance was nowhere positively enjoined by Him ; because Christianity was to be practicable to “all nations ;” and it goes to them, stripped of its precise

and various circumstances. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" (Rev. i. 10) seems to be the soul of the Christian Sabbath. In this view of the day, a thousand frivolous questions concerning its observance would be answered. We are going to spend a Sabbath in Eternity. The Christian will acquire as much of the Sabbath-spirit, as he can; and in proportion to a man's real piety, in every age of the Church, he will be found to have been a diligent observer of the Sabbath Day.—Ps. xlii. 1, 2; lxxxiv.—*R. Cecil.*

V. 10.—By this *hand* is signified Adam, and his whole posterity, whose right hand, which he stretched forth to take and eat of the forbidden fruit, was truly dried up and withered to all good works; while the left retained its strength, too ready and active in the performance of evil. Let therefore man *with the withered hand* come into the midst of the assembly, and into the Presence of Jesus; that the hand may be restored by His Word and Spirit, and no longer continue useless, but be employed in the works of God. Rom. v. 6; xii. 1; Acts iii. 2.—*S. Ambrose.*

V. 13.—*Stretch forth thine hand.* Those things, which God worketh in us and bestoweth upon us by His *grace*, He also requireth of us by His *command*. Sometimes He promiseth to "turn us," sometimes He commandeth us "to turn to Him;" sometimes He biddeth us to "put away sin," and sometimes He promiseth to "take it away" from us. In the one, He shows us what is our duty; and, in the other, where is our help. And, as this latter consideration calleth upon our faith, to *pray*;

so the former upon our obedience, to *work*. Comp. Ezek. xviii. 31 ; xxxvi. 26 ; Ps. li. 10 ; 1 Cor. v. 7 ; Ps. li. 7 ; Isa. i. 25 ; Rom. ix. 26 ; 2 Cor. iii. 16.—*Bp. Reynolds*.

It is one of the sophisms of every age to urge the Spirit's efficacy, as a plea for the neglect of means. It is folly and presumption to think, that, because power is with God and from God, efforts should not be in ourselves. S. John vi. 27 ; Phil. ii. 12, 13.—*Dr. Manton*.

V. 14.—The performance of so many miracles on the Sabbath day seems to intimate its being the most "acceptable time" for our doing good to the souls and bodies of men, after the pattern of Christ's example, and as we have opportunity. And it is this, perhaps, that may especially expose us to the unkind remarks of those, who make the Lord's Day a day of mere Pharisaic formalities, or one of idle selfish indulgence, by "doing *their own way*, by finding *their own* pleasure, and by speaking *their own words*. Isa. lviii. 13, 14 ; 1 S. Peter iv. 4.—*J. Ford*.

V. 19.—This instance of His humility and gentleness fitly precedes the manifestation of His severity at v. 34. Thus also did He weep, before he entered the city, and then drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple. xxv. 34, 41.—*Bengel*.

The spiritual Kingdom within you comes not "by observation." It is a growth ; so that you must not look for violent or sudden changes in yourself. Remember that the waters of the stream, however slowly they may at times appear to move, yet by never stopping on their journey are sure to reach the great sea. Let your progress

towards godliness be like that of the gentle stream, which neither murmurs, nor chafes, nor dashes against its banks ; but keeps ever flowing on and on, until it fulfils the task, which God has set it, and loses its own bitterness by mingling with the mighty waters. Isa. xxx. 15-17 ; Rom. ii. 7.—*A. W. Hare.*

V. 20.—I have heard Divines say, that those virtues, that were but sparks upon earth, shall become great and glorious flames in heaven. Zech. iv. 10.—*I. Walton.*

The Christian religion made its way through Paganism (v. 21) with an amazing progress and activity. Its victories were the victories of reason, unassisted by the force of human power, and as gentle, as the triumphs of light over darkness. Ps. xli. 8-11 ; lxxii.—*Addison.*

V. 24.—Next to our body and soul is the care of our reputation, which whose hath lost is no better than civilly dead . . . Innocence itself is no antidote against evil tongues. Neither greatness nor sanctity can secure any man from unjust calumny. . . . Look upon the Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of the ever-living God, God clothed in flesh, and see whether any other were His lot, whiles He sojourned in this region of mortality. Matt. xi. 19 ; xxvi. 65 ; xxvii. 63 ; John ix. 24 ; x. 20.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 25.—Our Church's strength would be irresistible, humanly speaking, were it but "at Unity with itself." If it remains *divided*, part against part, we shall see the energy, which was meant to subdue the world preying on itself Phil. i. 27, 28.—*J. H. Newman.*

V. 30.—We are born in the womb of the Church, we are nourished with her milk, we are quickened with her

Spirit. Whoever, having left the Church, is joined to an adulteress is cut off from the promises of the Church : nor can any one attain her rewards, who forsakes her. He is an alien ; he is profane ; he is an adversary. No one can have God to be his Father, who has not the Church to be his Mother. The Lord cautions us, and says, *He that is not with Me is against Me ; and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad.* The man, that breaks the peace and unity of the Church, is against Christ ; he, who gathereth elsewhere apart from the Church, scattereth her abroad. He, who regards not this Unity, regards not the Law of God, regards not the faith of the Father and of the Son, and keepeth not the Truth unto Salvation. S. John xv. 6 ; Acts ii. 47 ; 1 S. John ii. 19.—*S. Cyprian.*

The differences among Christians about lesser matters prove the truth of those great and fundamental points in which they all agree. Phil. iii. 16.—*Bp. Horne.*

V. 32.—Whosoever taketh offence at this weakness of my assumed human body shall have his error forgiven, since it was the result of ignorance ; but there is no forgiveness for him, who shall speak evil of the plain undeniable works of the Godhead. This sin He terms, *blaspheming against the Holy Ghost.* S. John xv. 21–25 —*Isid. Clarius.*

The blasphemy against *the Son of man* was, when men considered Christ, as a mere man, and did disgracefully tax his conversation by saying, “Behold a glutton, a bibber of wine, a friend to publicans and sinners.” But the blasphemy against *the Holy Ghost* was, when men

believing Christ's miracles did enviously ascribe them to the devil, which they knew and believed to be done by God's power. S. John vii. 28.—*John Hales.*

If the Holy Ghost be not God, how can we sin against Him? Or, how comes our sin against Him to be unpardonable, if He be not God? Acts v. 3, 4; vii. 51.—*Bp. Beveridge.*

V. 36.—The meaning of *an idle word* may be best understood from the metaphor, whence it appears to be taken; that of money not employed, but lying dead in the hands of the possessor. Our words are as precious in their proper use, as gold and silver; but they become *idle* words, when they yield no interest, when they bear no good fruit in promoting the glory of God, the edification or comfort of our neighbour, the Salvation of ourselves, and of those, who hear us. Prov. x. 21; Eph. iv. 29, 30; Ps. lxxi. 24.—*J. Ford.*

Idle words are deemed of little consequence. There be more deaths, contracted out of the unperceived irregularities of diet, than by open and apparent surfeits. If venial sins be less in quality, they are more in number; and their multitude equals them to the others' greatness. "Despise not venial sins, because they are small; but rather fear them, because they are many;" was S. Augustine's counsel of old. The aggregation of atoms made at first the world's huge mass; and the aggregation of drops did drown it, when it was made. Prov. x. 8, 19; Eccus. xiv. 1; xix. 1; Cant. ii. 15.—*O. Feltham.*

You have escaped the formidable rocks; beware, lest you are wrecked on the sands. S. Luke xv. 28, 29.—*S. Gregory.*

If men shall be strictly judged for *every idle word*, how much more severe will the judgment be on every word that is sharp, false, injurious, proud, wanton, flattering, or calumnious? Ps. cxli. 3.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 39.—*Adulterous generation*; not because the particular sin of adultery was so frequent in that age; but because by every kind of sin a man, under the contract of religion, runs into that character, wherewith Solomon describes the adulteress, who “forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the Covenant of her God.” S. James iv. 4.—*Dean Young.*

Seeketh a sign. Let us not seek for signs and wonders, or ask for sensible tokens of God’s favour; let us not indulge enthusiasm, or become the slaves of superstition, who are “the children of God by faith.” Gal. iii. 26. Faith only can introduce us into the unseen presence of God. Let us venture to believe; let us make trial, before we see; and the evidence, which others demand *before* believing, we shall gain more abundantly *by* believing. Rom. iv. 18–22; Heb. xi. 6; 1 S. John v. 10.—*J. H. Newman.*

V. 40.—*Three days and three nights.* At the instant of our Lord’s dissolution, our satisfaction was made; and the work of our Redemption, so far as it depended on His sufferings, “finished”; so that, had it not been for a witness of the reality and truth of His Death, and of the power and reality of His Resurrection, and the fulfilling of the decree of God manifested in the Scripture, He might have reassumed life the next instant after His Death. For the debt to the justice of God was fully satisfied; and His continuance in the grave *until the third day* was not by

the power of death, which He vanquished in the instant of His dissolution, but by a voluntary subjecting Himself unto that state for the strengthening of our faith, and the fulfilling of the Scriptures. S. John xi. 42 ; Acts i. 3.—*Sir M. Hale.*

V. 43.—Hell is a barren place. Nothing grows in that land of darkness to solace and recreate the sinner's mind. You shall have your lusts, but want the food you long for. S. Luke xvi. 19, 24.—*Gurnall.*

V. 44.—God doth not, and the devil cannot, necessitate any body to sin. When we sin, the fault is in our own wills ; for we should not have consented, and then no sin would follow. When it is said in the Gospel that the evil spirit *enters* into a man, it is not said that he breaks open the door, or that he does so much, as draw the latch ; but that he finds it empty and open already, and all things ready for his entertainment : so that, if we reach not our hands to welcome him, when he comes, and set not our doors open to let him in, when he knocks, his temptations can never do us hurt ; he can but intreat us, as he did Christ : and, if we fall, the fault is our own ; we cast ourselves down headlong into misery and sin. iv. 6 ; Gen. xxxix. 12 ; Prov. vii. 6–21 ; S. James iv. 7.—*Bp. Cosin.*

V. 45.—No doubt they are the patron guardian saints of the seven deadly sins—their tutelary devils.—*Dr. Allestry.*

What Christ said of the evil spirit in a wicked man, may be said of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a penitent and faithful Christian. When He finds the house of the

soul clean, and *swept*, and *garnished*, then He comes and brings with Him *seven other spirits of grace*, and *dwells* in it. (Isa. xi. 2, 3). The Holy Ghost abhors uncleanness, will not come near to a defiled soul. Repentance sweeping the house, and scouring it clean, and casting out all that defiles, presents it in a clean state ; so that the Holy Ghost may enter into it, and fill it bounteously with all His good gifts. S. Luke xxii. 9-12 ; Acts ii. 38.—*Bp. Brounrig.*

V. 48.—The claims of parents are not here disallowed. We are only taught that spiritual ties bind faster, and are more sacred, than mere carnal ones. Pa. xlv. 11 ; S. Luke ii. 49 ; Gal. i. 17.—*S. Ambrose.*

V. 50.—I think there is a mighty emphasis here in these words, my *Father which is in heaven* ; as if he said “ You Jews think of Me, as a mere man, and understand not any other relation, that I have, besides that, which is according to the flesh ; but know ye, that I am of a higher Original, even the Eternal Son of the Eternal God dwelling in *heaven* ; and, as such, I own no relation, but what is spiritual, and every obedient disciple of mine is to *Me* ‘ a brother, or sister, or mother.’ ” The blessedness of the Virgin is not so altogether proper to her, or incommunicable to others, but that the meanest sincere Christian may share with her in the better part of it. iii. 17 ; vi. 9 ; S. Jas. i. 22-25 ; Rev. xxii. 14 ; S. John ii. 4 ; xx. 17.—*Bp. Bull.*

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSE 2.—*Great multitudes, &c.* Such a demonstration of popular favour would most probably have encouraged an impostor, or indeed any honest founder of some new system, to augur the most abundant success to his undertaking ; but our Lord, as knowing and searching the heart, saw in this outward show no solid ground of encouragement. Hence He meets the multitude, not with words of congratulation, but rather of caution and warning. He takes occasion to guard them against those dispositions of mind, which render the Word, even when preached by Himself, of no effect to the Salvation of souls. An instructive parallel to this is found at S. Luke xiv. 25, 26. See also S. John vi. 26.—*J. Ford.*

V. 5.—*Forthwith they sprung up.* Religion sometimes runs into stalk and blade, into leaves and suckers, which should be concocted in pith and fruit. vii. 21 ; S. James i. 26.—*Flavel.*

V. 8.—Among those, who hear the wise, four species may be distinguished—the sponge, the funnel, the filter, and the sieve. The sponge swallows up every thing ; the funnel allows that to escape at one end, which it receives at the other ; the filter allows the liquor to escape, and retains the dregs ; the sieve rejects the chaff, and retains nothing but the wheat. S. Luke iii. 17.—*A Jewish Proverb.*

Most Christians are perfect too soon ; which is the reason that they are never perfect. xix. 20 ; S. Mark iv. 28.—*Farindon.*

V. 9.—*He that hath ears, &c.* (v. 4.) To see and consider the emptiness and error of all worldly happiness ; to see the grossness of sensuality, the pooriness of pride, the stupidity of covetousness, the vanity of dress, the delusion of honours, the blindness of our passions, the uncertainty of our lives, and the shortness of all worldly projects—these are meditations, that are suited to all capacities, fitted to strike all minds : they require no depth of thought, nor sublime speculation ; but are forced upon us by almost every thing, that we see and hear. This is that wisdom, that crieth and putteth forth her voice in the streets (Prov. i. 20–24 ; S. John vii. 37, 38) ; that standeth at all our doors, that appealeth to all our senses, teaching us in every thing and every where, by all that we see, all that we hear, by births and burials, by sickness and health, by life and death, by pains and poverty, by misery and by vanity, and by all the changes and chances of life, that there is nothing else for man to look after, no other nature for him to drive at, but a happiness, which is only to be found in the hopes and expectations of Religion.—*Wm. Law.*

The Country Parson often tells his people that Sermons are dangerous things ; that none goes out of Church, as he came in ; but either better or worse ; that none is careless before his judge ; and that the Word of God shall judge us. By these and other means the Parson procures attention. Acts x. 33 ; xvi. 14 ; S. John xii. 48 ; 2 Cor. ii. 16.—*G. Herbert.*

V. 11.—It has been justly observed, that religion and its evidence may serve equally to the ends of a moral probation to all, to whom it is offered, however it may be received. But perhaps it is by its *internal* evidence in particular, that this trial is most distinctly made, that evidence having the nearest connection with our personal habits ; whereby, whilst we scan religion, its Author, it is plain, may be making His judgment of us. For it is a great and universal truth, which is spoken by Christ (S. John vii. 17), “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.” Micah ii. 7 ; Wisd. i. 4, 5 ; Rom. xii. 1, 2.—*Davison*.

V. 12.—God’s benefits come not alone, but one is the pledge of another. The grant of a mite is the assignment of a talent. A drop of dew from heaven is a prognostic of a gracious shower, of a flood, which nothing can draw dry, but ingratitude. S. James i. 5 ; iv. 6.—*Farindon*.

God *gives*, in proportion as we *use*. xxv. 28 ; 1 Cor. xv. 10, 58.—*J. Ford*.

V. 13.—Parables were peculiarly adapted to answer a double purpose ; both of giving instruction to the simple, to whom Christ explained them in private, and of darkening the minds of the proud and disobedient, whom He left without the key of interpretation. S. Mark iv. 34). In this respect, parables were like “the pillar of the cloud” in Egypt. “It came between the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel ; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these.” Exod. xiv. 20.—*J. Ford*.

V. 17.—I doubt not but all, to whom the sound of the Gospel hath any way come, are strictly obliged to a positive faith in Christ for salvation: when God hath showed them *this Name* (Acts iv. 12), in vain they seek for another. Nominal Christ is necessary to those, who have nominally heard of Him. Yet who can tie up the Spirit of God from illuminating this to the souls of the heathen either in this life, or in their very farewell of it? But this is rather possible than proving; though I hope it will not prove a paradox, if I should beg leave to believe, that some, who never heard of Christ, may yet die and be saved by having a faith in Him. How many of them have died penitent for their sins, for which they have found their conscience checking them, and withal wholly resting themselves on the *Mercy* of the Supreme God. . . Now, I would ask the question, whether *Christ crucified*, and *God's Mercy* be not things coincident? S. Luke i. 50, 54, 72.—*O. Feltham.*

Think, what shame it will be to have it said that many honest heathens spent more thoughts about a future life, and loved it more, and enjoyed it more, while it was a mere conjecture with them, than we do, now it is a certainty. Jer. ii. 10, 11.—*Dean Young.*

V. 18.—This kind of instruction by Catechizing is the foundation of all other improvements. Reading, preaching, reproof, and exhortation, are all cast away upon uncatechized persons. vii. 26; Heb. v. 12–14; S. Luke i. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 7.—*Dean Comber.*

V. 19.—*Heareth the Word of the Kingdom.* By the ear the gate of death was first opened; by the ear is now the entrance into life. Gen. iii. ; Isa. iv. 3; S. John viii. 47.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 20.—These persons take Christ, but under a false pretence : either they take the promises only, and let Christ alone ; or, they take Christ the Saviour, but not Christ the Lord ; are willing to be saved by Him, but never think of serving Him. They abstract the cheap and profitable attributes of Christ, His Priestly office of satisfaction and propitiation ; but never consider Him, as a King. i. 21 ; S. Luke ii. 49 ; Col. ii. 6 ; 1 Cor. xii. 3.—*Dr. Hammond.*

With joy receiveth it. I could not but think, as I have often remarked to others, that much more of true religion consists in deep humility, brokenness of heart, and an abasing sense of barrenness, and want of grace, and holiness, than most, who are called Christians, imagine ; especially those, who have been esteemed the converts of the late day, many of whom seem to know of no other religion but elevated joys and affections, arising only from some flights of imagination, or some suggestion made to their mind of Christ's being theirs, God's loving them, and the like. S. John v. 35 ; S. Mark vi. 20 ; S. Luke iv. 23, 29.—*D. Brainerd.*

V. 21.—*When tribulation, &c.* Half our virtue arises from our being out of the way of temptation. Heb. xii. 4.—*Adam.*

A variety of circumstances render the sinner's first approaches to Christ difficult. They, who find an easy access, will find an easy departure when *troubles* arise. Eccclus. iv. 16–18 ; S. Luke ix. 42.—*R. Cecil.*

V. 22.—In gold there is a halter ; in silver there is bird-lime ; in the farm there is a bond ; in the love of the world there is a chain. While we search for gold, we are

strangled ; while for silver, we stick fast ; while we seize upon the farm, we are taken prisoners. 2 Pet. ii. 19 ; 1 Tim. vi. 9.—*S. Ambrose.*

V. 23.—*Understandeth it, &c.* I have always found that such preaching of others hath most commanded my heart, which hath most illuminated my head. S. Luke xxiv. 32, 45.—*Dr. Whichcote.*

Above all, pray before, after, and in hearing. Dart up desires to God. He is “the Lord of the harvest,” whose influence doeth all. The difference of the soil makes indeed the difference of success ; but the Lord hath the privilege of bettering the soil : He, that framed the heart, changes it, when and how He will. There is a curse on all grounds naturally, that fell on the earth for man’s sake ; but fell more on the ground of man’s own heart within him. “*Thorns* and briars shalt thou bring forth.” Now it is He, who denounceth that curse, that alone hath power to remove it. He is both the Sovereign owner of the seed, and changer of the soil : He turns a wilderness into Carmel by His Spirit ; and no ground, no heart, can be good ’till He change it. Prov. xvi. 1 ; Isa. lv. 8–13.—*Abp. Leighton.*

V. 25.—Wheresover the finger of God is, there doth Satan lay his claw. If God makes “tables of stone,” he will set up “a calf.” Peter Chrysologus says, he did not sow it, as the wheat, but sowed it *upon*. The good things of God are first ; the devil’s work after. The growth of evil is not natural, but accidental. Ex. xxxi. 18 ; Judg. vi. 3 ; Eccl. vii. 29.—*Farindon.*

Wherever the good is in the increase, the evil becomes more apparent. Phil. ii. 15.—*Bengel.*

V. 30.—I regard the Church as full, both of wheat and chaff. I do good where I can. I tolerate those, to whom I cannot do good. I shun *the chaff*, for fear of becoming chaff myself; but I shun not *the floor*, lest I come to nothing.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 30.—*The reapers*—(*the Angels* v. 39). Even in this life the appearance of a single Angel to the very best of men with words of comfort and blessing has always been attended with fear and trembling. It seems, that the sight of a being superior to ourselves and without sin is such, as no human being can witness without fear. But how terrible must be the sight of thousands of Angels, each one fearful to behold, clothed with power to sever the wicked from the righteous, and to hurl amongst them the thunder bolts of Almighty wrath! xxvi. 53; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.—*Bp. Medley.*

This parable of the *leaven* (v. 33) is concerning the Kingdom of God, which “cometh not with observation;” the parable of the *mustard seed* is concerning the same Kingdom, as it displays itself openly, and cannot be hid (v. 14). *That* sets forth the power and action of the truth on the world, brought into contact with it; *this* the power of the truth to develop itself from within itself; how it is, as the tree, shut up within the seed, which will unfold itself according to the inward law of its being.—*Abp. Trench.*

V. 32.—*The least.* The first work of grace is the *desire* of grace. Neh. i. 11; Job viii. 7.—*Fulgentius.*

V. 33.—Religion doth possess and affect *the whole man*. In the understanding, it is knowledge; in the

life, it is obedience ; in the affections, it is delight in God ; in our carriage and behaviour, it is modesty, calmness, gentleness, quietness, candour, ingenuity ; in our dealings, it is uprightness, integrity, correspondence with the rules of righteousness. Religion makes men virtuous, in all instances. S. Mark xvi. 9 ; S. John v. 4 ; vii. 23 ; Eph. vi. 11, 13.—*Dr. Whichcote.*

V. 35.—*Things kept secret, &c.* Concerning that faith, hope, and charity, without which there can be no Salvation, was there ever any mention made, saving only in that Law, which God Himself hath revealed from heaven ? There is not in the world a syllable muttered with certain truth, concerning any of these three, more than hath been supernaturally received from the mouth of the Eternal God. Ps. lxxviii. 2 ; Acts xvii. 23 ; 1 Cor. ii. 9.—*Hooker.*

V. 39.—However the devil labours to keep his own kingdom in peace and tranquillity, yet he seeks nothing more than to cause divisions in the Kingdom of Christ. S. Luke xi. 21.—*March.*

V. 41.—*His Angels—His Kingdom.* Here is the Majesty of the Son of God. *His* are the Angels. *His* is the Kingdom of Heaven. *His* is the world. Heb. i. 6, 8.—*Bengel.*

We long for this Blessed time. Thus, the confusions, failings, and trials in the Church Militant on earth excite us to raise our eyes to the future peace, order, beauty, and felicity of the Church glorified in Heaven. Through the mists and clouds we see the clear blue sky, the calm and joy of Angels, the pure river of God, the crystal sea, and the Throne of God. (Gen. xlix. 18 ; observe context).—*Chr. Wordsworth.*

V. 43.—The light of Revelation shines “more and more.” It is a Revelation “from faith to faith !” Daniel speaks of our shining in heaven, like the *stars* (xii. 3) ; Christ speaks of our shining, like *the Sun*. xi. 11 ; S. John i. 40, 51.—*J. Ford.*

How gloriously bright may we suppose the *souls* of men will be, when even their bodies shall be as resplendent, as the stars in the firmament ! Phil. iii. 21.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 44.—To *hide* the treasure found, what is it but to cover received grace under the veil of *humility* and not to be puffed up with the light sent from above, nor make proud boast of Divine consolations and revelations, lest vain glory corrupt the true ? S. Paul said, “It was not expedient for him to glory” (2 Cor. xii. 1), though no one might have such cause, as he had, for it ; yet he speaks there of a man “caught up into Paradise,” as if it had not been of himself ; and not that mention made either till “fourteen years after.” Numb. viii. 3, 8 ; Gal. i. 15–17.—*Card. Bellarmine.*

It is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. (Life of Christ p. i. 55.) Gen. xviii. 27 ; Eph. iii. 8 ; 1 Cor. iii. 18 ; viii. 2.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

The man wants to be robbed, who makes a show of his treasure on the public road.—*S. Gregory.*

V. 47.—The Word of God according to the sundry effects and properties thereof hath sundry names. For example ; for that it increaseth and multiplieth, it is

called "seed;" for that it cutteth the heart and divideth the flesh from the spirit, it is called a "sword;" for that it taketh and encloseth us and bringeth us together, it is called a "net;" for that it washeth us clean, it is called "water;" for that it inflameth us, it is called "fire;" for that it feedeth us, it is called "bread;" and even so, for that it openeth and giveth us an entry into the house, it is called the "key." This house is the Kingdom of Heaven; Christ is the door; the Word of God is the key. Ps. xix. 7-11; cxix. 96.—*Bp. Jewel.*

V. 51.—*Have ye understood, &c.* 'Tis now time that every tender, open, guilty heart begin to retire into itself; every man consider, whether he be not the man the parable aims at; that you be not content to have your ears affected, or the suburbs of the soul filled with the sound, unless the heart of the city be taken with its efficacy. xxvi. 22; 2 Sam. xii. 7.—*Dr. Hammond.*

V. 52.—Concerning the hardness of Scripture, he, that is so weak that he cannot brook "strong meat," yet he may suck the sweet and tender milk, and defer the rest, until he wax stronger, and come to more knowledge. For God receiveth the learned and unlearned, and casteth away none, but is indifferent unto all. And the Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easy for every man to use and to walk in; as also of high hills and mountains, which few men can climb unto. And whosoever giveth his mind to holy Scriptures with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be, saith S. John Chrysostom, that he should be left without help. For, either God Almighty will send him some godly Doctor to teach him, as He did to instruct the Eunuch (Acts viii. 29); or else,

if we lack a learned man to instruct and teach us, yet God Himself from above will give light unto our minds, and teach us those things, which are necessary for us and wherein we be ignorant.—*Homilies.*

V. 58.—The benevolence of God is greater than His beneficence. Christ's Blood is ever on the flow, though there be few, that take the tide, and are carried along with it. We will not suffer Him to be good ; we will not suffer Him to be merciful ; we will not suffer Him to save us. xxiii. 37 ; Rom. x. 21 ; S. Jude 5.—*Farindon.*

Because of their unbelief. Neither can Satan do any great hurt unto the Christian, so long as *faith* is upon the place. S. Luke xxii. 32 ; Eph. vi. 16 ; 1 S. Peter v. 9.—*Gurnall.*

CHAPTER XIV.

VERSE 2.—John was a *voice crying* (iii. 3). You cannot kill a voice, but, like that of Abel, it cries the louder, being freed from the body (Gen. iv. 10). And so did John, who, as he once at the approach of Christ sprang in the womb of his mother, before he was born (S. Luke i. 44), so now, at the fame of Christ, he sprang after his death in the conscience of Herod ; of which Herod was so sensible, that he cries, *John is risen from the dead*. And when his parasites would quiet him with tales (that it was Elias, one of the prophets, or, I wot not who)—S. Mark vi. 16—he cries again, *It is John, whom I beheaded ! he is risen from the dead !* and he spake truer than he was aware ; for John was risen in Christ. As Christ suffers in those, that be His, so those, that suffer for Him, arise in Him. He dies in them, they rise in Him. The *voice* indeed was gone ; but here was that, which it proclaimed—the *Eternal Word*. Acts. ix. 4 ; Rev. vi. 9–11.—*Wm. Austin*.

V. 5.—*They counted him as a prophet*. Justice and integrity are always valuable, because they cannot easily be imitated. Professions of religion are easily made ; religious phraseology is soon caught and copied ; the Shibboleth of religious party may admit the indulgence of irritating and unchristian feelings ; the external appearance of devotion it is very possible to assume ; but real honesty of character, integrity of purpose, and justice,

unbending to take an advantage or inflict a wrong, is neither easy to be attained, nor easy to be counterfeited. vii. 29 ; xix. 18, 19 ; Rom. ii. 21, 22. — *Bp. Medley.*

V. 6.—When I see an afflicted and an unhappy man, I say to myself ; there is perhaps a man, whom the world would envy, if they knew the value of his sorrows, which are possibly intended only to soften his heart, and to turn his affections towards their proper centre. But, when I see, or hear of, a crowd of voluptuaries, who have no ears but for music, no eyes but for splendour, and no tongue but for impertinence and folly, I say—or, at least, I see occasion to say—this is madness. This, if persisted in, must have a tragical conclusion. It will condemn you, not only as Christians unworthy of the name, but as intelligent creatures. You know by the light of nature, if you have not quenched it, that there is a God, and that a life like yours cannot be according to His will. Isa. v. 11, 12 ; Amos vi. 1–6.—*Couper.*

V. 9.—The days of pleasure are often the vigils of Repentance. S. Luke xv. 14–17 ; Rom. vi. 21 ; S. Jas. iv. 9.—*Gratian.*

With the ungodly, “*fear* is on every side.” Herod fears the resurrection of John (v. 2). He “fears the multitude” (v. 5), the very subjects of his power, whose duty it rather was to fear *him*. He fears now his own friends and courtiers. Thus does an unprincipled life unnerve and unfit a man for the discharge of public duties, and make even the social comforts of life a snare and trouble to him. ii. 3 ; xxvii. 24 ; Ps. xxvi. 1–3 ; Prov. xxix. 25.—*J. Ford.*

His coffin is his pulpit ; his grave is his temple ; and he still teaches you, though he says never a word. Now he is in heaven, he lives in his good name upon earth ; as, when he was upon earth, he lived by his good heart in heaven. Death has but done us a courtesy in breaking the box, to make the precious ointment of his fame to have a more fragrant and diffusive savour. S. Mark xiv. 3-8 ; Heb. xi. 4 ; xiii. 7.—*B. Riveley (Fun. Sermon of Bp. Reynolds).*

V. 11.—Why in a *charger* ? Why dost thou so honourably present what so vilely thou didst destroy, unless it be to shew, that “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints ?” S. Luke xvi. 22.—*Pet. Chrysologus.*

V. 12.—We have a very affecting proof, in this incident, that the distrust and jealousy, with which John’s disciples regarded the Ministry of our Blessed Lord was now perfectly removed : that “rod of bitterness” was plucked up (S. John iii. 26). Nothing more calms our animosities, more reduces our minds to reason and moderation, more disposes us to peace and charity, than a sanctified affliction. Here we learn, moreover, that it is the duty and privilege of the Church, when under any suffering and persecution, *to go and tell Jesus* ; and, more particularly, on our losing a faithful and beloved Minister, that we must *go and tell Jesus* ; that He may comfort our hearts under the sad bereavement, and provide a like-minded successor to have a care for our souls. Gen. xlii. 21, 22 ; Heb. xiii. 7, 8.—*J. Ford.*

V. 17.—S. Hilary conjectures that *the five loaves* represented the Five Books of Moses, and the *two fishes*

the preaching of the Prophets and of John the Baptist. Supposing this, we may consider with Emanuel Sà that Christ's private exposition of the Scriptures to His disciples, of which we read in the last Chapter, prepared and qualified them for rightly administering to the people that spiritual food, which the Lord had first given to them. xiii. 52.—*J. Ford.*

V. 19.—*He blessed* (xv. 36); *gave thanks*. 'Tis a general fault, that the most common and frequent, the most obvious and conspicuous favours of God, the constant rising of the sun upon us, the descent of fruitful showers, the recourse of temperate seasons, the continuance of our life, the enjoyment of health, the providential dispensations of wealth and competent means of livelihood, the daily protection from incident dangers, the helps of improving knowledge, obtaining virtue, becoming happy, and such like excellent benefits, we commonly little mind or regard; and, consequently, seldom return due *thanks* for them. Ps. lxx.; viii. 34, 35.—*Dr. Barrow.*

V. 23.—Conf.: S. Mark i. 35. If our Blessed Lord used to pray early before day, if He spent whole nights in prayer, if the devout Anna was day and night in the Temple, if S. Paul and Silas "at midnight sang praises unto God," if the primitive Christians for several hundred years, besides their hours of prayer in the day-time, met publicly in the Churches at midnight to join in psalms and prayers, is it not certain that these practices showed the state of their hearts? Are they not so many plain proofs of the whole turn of their minds? And, if you live in a contrary state, wasting great part of every day in sleep, thinking any time soon enough to be at your

prayers, is it not equally certain that this practice as much shows the state of your heart, and the whole turn of your mind? *xxi ; xxvi. 40.—Wm. Law.*

There is no doubt but *prayer* is needful daily, ever profitable, and at all times commendable. If it be for ourselves alone, 'tis necessary ; and 'tis charitable, when for others. Prayer should be the key of the day, and the lock of the night. At night, it is our covering ; in the morning, it is our armour : so at all times it defends us from the malice of Satan, our own subordinations and betrayings, the unequal weather the world assaults us with, and preserves us in the favour and esteem of heaven. *Ps. cxxxii. 1-5 ; cxix. 148 ; cxliii. 8-12 ; 1 Sam. xiii. 12.—O. Feltham.*

V. 25.—Our Lord descending from *the mountain* went, and walked upon *the sea* ; to show unto us the admirable effects of holy prayer, and the singular comfort received therein to be so great, as to encourage and embolden the men of prayer to set upon any hard and difficult thing. *xxvi. 44, 46 ; Ps. lvi. 9-13.—Bonaventura.*

We follow Him with fear and distrust through the deep waters of affliction, though those waters are "a wall unto us on the right hand and on the left." *Exod. xiv. 22 ; Isa. xliii. 2.—Bp. Medley.*

V. 28.—Faith is nothing else than the soul's venture. It ventures *to* Christ, in opposition to all legal terrors ; it ventures *on* Christ, in opposition to our own guiltiness ; it ventures *for* Christ, in opposition to all difficulties and discouragements.—*Wm. Bridge.*

Alas ! Peter, thou knowest not thine own heart. It is but like a quiet sea ; when the wind, the temptation,

shall blow, thou wilt be quickly troubled and find an alteration : thy tide will turn, and the ebb of thy zeal will flow. xiii. 20, 21 ; xxvi. 33, 35 ; Ps. xxx. 6 ; lxxviii. 9, 10.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 29.—He was not reprov'd for venturing out of the ship, but for not persevering in faith. He entered upon the trial ; well ; but he ought to have gone on. S. Luke xiv. 30 ; Gal. iii. 3, 4 ; v. 7, 8.—*Bengel.*

Tread on the sea, lest the sea drown you. Ps. lx. 12 ; 1 Tim. vi. 9.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 30.—It is very hard for the best man, in a sudden extremity of death, to satisfy himself in apprehending his stay, and reposing his heart upon it ; for the soul is so oppressed with sudden terror, that it cannot well command itself, 'till it have digested an evil. It were miserable for the best Christian, if all his former prayers and meditations did not serve to aid him in his last straits, and meet together in the centre of his extremity ; yielding, though not sensible relief, yet secret benefit to his soul : whereas, the worldly man, in this case, having not laid up for the hour, hath no comfort from God, or from others, or from himself. vi. 34 ; xxv. 6 ; Deut. xxxiii. 25 ; Eccl. viii. 12 ; Isa. xxxviii. 2, 3.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 33.—Like some precious gums, Grace distils most and in greatest plenty after storms and violent thunders. Isa. liv. 11–14 ; Jer. xxxi. 18–20.—*Fr. Quarles.*

V. 36.—*Touch the hem of His garment.* A dim, or blear eye, that looked upon the brazen serpent, did procure a remedy for a wound, as much as a clear and well-conditioned eye : and a little faith, casting its weak

beams upon Christ and His death, will go far. ix. 12 ; Ps. cxxxiii. 2 ; Rom. x. 11-13 ; Mal. iv. 2.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

Brought unto Him—besought Him, &c. Come thou so far ; come, or be content to be *brought* ; to be brought by example, to be brought by a statute, to be brought by curiosity : come any way to *touch the hem of His garment* ; yea, the hem of His servant, of Aaron's garment ; and thou shalt participate of the sweet ointment, which flows from the Head to the hem of the garment (Ps. cxxxiii. 2). Come to the House of God, His Church ; join with the congregation of the saints ; love the body, and love the garments too ; that is, the order, the discipline, the decency, the unity of the Church : love even the hem of the garment, that almost touches the ground ; that is, such ceremonies, as had a good use in their first institution, . . . which have been induced by earthly men, and are not immediate Institutions from God ; yet love that hem of that garment, those outward assistances of devotion in the Church. Zech. viii. 23 ; S. Luke i. 6.—*Dr. Donne.*

CHAPTER XV.

VERSE 2.—Why was it commanded in the Law (Lev. xix. 14-16); “Thou shalt not curse the *deaf*?” Have then the deaf any special privilege above their suffering brethren; so that, while every imaginable abuse may be heaped upon the blind, the maimed, the deformed, and the stammering, nothing of the kind may be done in their single instance? This cannot be; for charity, we know, is universal: “Love covereth all sins” (Prov. x. 12). Still, if we are to believe commentators on Scripture, God here designed to express a more particular concern for the deaf, because it is an extremely unjust and cruel thing to attack those, who since they cannot hear the accusations brought against them, have not the means of defending themselves. Prov. xxvi. 20; 3 S. John 10; Titus iii. 2.—*Segneri*.

Tenderness of conscience is always to be distinguished from scrupulousness. The conscience cannot be kept too sensible and tender; but scrupulousness arises from bodily or mental infirmity, and discovers itself in a multitude of ridiculous superstitions, and painful feelings. Acts xxiv. 16; Col. ii. 20-23.—*R. Cecil*.

V. 4.—We may observe a ray of the infinite Wisdom of God in the order and method of this Commandment. For, after He had prescribed laws for His own honour, His next case is for the *honour of our parents*; because they are next, under God, the authors and originals of our lives and being. Eph. vi. 1-3.—*Bp. Hopkins*.

V. 5.—*It is a gift, &c.* As we would not in any way disparage true primitive self-denial—on the contrary, we honour, and revere it, and account it most exceedingly blessed—so in proportion would we beseech those, who feel themselves impelled to seeming acts of high self-denial, to search and prove their own hearts the more unsparingly ; lest there be something there cherished, tending to make their outward sacrifices void and profane. . . . Our Lord condemned those, who pleaded a religious vow for refusing due succour to their *parents* ; and will not such His sentence tell against us, if we permit excited feelings, be the matter ever so sacred, to make us unmindful of what we owe to any kind of parental authority ? S. Peter and S. Andrew, though they “ forsook all,” did not so in such a sense, as to imply alienation from their parents ; for we find them presently afterwards in the house of Simon, attending on his sick mother-in-law : and, though for the time the sons of Zebedee left their father in the ship, we know that S. John still so far resided with his mother in his own house, as to be able to take the blessed Virgin Mary there from the hour, when our Lord was crucified. 1 Cor. xiii. 1–4 ; 1 Tim. v. 8 ; Rom. xiv. 16.—*J. Keble.*

V. 8.—Of all objects under the sun in this vain world, there is none, that can be found more exalted, more noble, more God-like, than the heart of man ; wherefore God demands no other thing of thee, than thy heart. Ps. cviii. 1.—*S. Bernard.*

The Lord weighs the heart, not the material offering ; nor does He regard how great is the sacrifice, but from how great store it proceeds. v. 23, 24.—*S. Gregory.*

V. 9.—The two great sects, into which the Jewish Church was divided, carried away the bulk of the people ; but, whatever rivalry subsisted between them, and whatever differences of opinion kept up the distinction of Pharisees and Sadducees, yet both united in opposing the Gospel ; and each seemed to vie with the other in discovering a most incurable malignity against Christ and his disciples. . . He did not flatter the prejudices of either, nor attempt to engage their good-will by any acts of accommodation. His doctrine was in direct opposition to the tenets of both ; and His example involved a constant reprehension of their practices. He resisted with equal firmness the haughty scepticism of the Sadducee, and the abject superstition of the Pharisee. Against the one He maintained the doctrine of a future life ; and in the presence of the other He expatiated on the folly of ceremonial observances and the fallacy of traditional doctrines. S. Luke xxiii. 12 ; S. John vii. 26 ; 1 Thes. ii. 3-5 ; Eph. vi. 19, 20.—*White*.

V. 13.—The planting of “the trees of righteousness” is from God’s Word ; their growth is from God’s Spirit ; their root is faith, their sap is love ; they are full of the fruits of holiness ; they mount up far above the earth in their beautiful uprightness ; they grow and point towards God. And shall they, after all die ? Verily I say unto you, not one of them shall die. Isa. lx. 21 ; Ps. i. 1-4.—*A. W. Hare*.

V. 18.—Look into the Gospel ; examine the places, where the mind, the inward man, “the inside of the cup and platter,” are commanded to be purified. Consider how frequently this is pressed. Do not you see what a

stress the Holy Ghost lays upon it? Why should you deceive,—why should you delude yourselves? Why should you think it needless? Is it not wisdom to believe Him, who is the Fountain of truth and wisdom? Does not reason, nay, does not sense tell you, that, if the waters in the spring be muddy, the streams and rivulets cannot be clear? What! would you have the fruit good, when the tree is naught? How can your actions be pleasing to God, when your minds are full of weariness, and unwillingness, and backwardness in His service? Can the outward man be good, when the inward is rotten and putrified. Are you wise builders, do you think—do you hope to make a good piece of work of it, to build the top of the house, when you have not laid the foundation? iii. 10; Isa. i. 10–15; S. James iv. 4, 8; Rom. xii. 1–3. —*Dr. Horneck.*

V. 19.—We are sinners by the corruption of *the heart*; and it is a fatal mistake to suppose that we are so only by the commission of sin. Our guilt does not then begin to *exist*, when it is brought into action, but to *appear*; and what was always manifest to God is now become so to ourselves and others. ix. 4; xix. 8; Rom. vii. 7, 13, 18; Acts v. 4.—*Adam.*

Ought we not to long to get rid of such a heart and to receive a different heart in its stead? A heart pure and loving, kind and gentle, true and humble, holy and pious; a heart, that covets Heavenly treasures, and does not vex itself about the pelf, the amusements, or the honours, which the old-hearted world are gasping after? Ps. cxix. 5; Ezek. xi. 19, 20.—*A. W. Hare.*

V. 21.—No wind so powerful to drive us *from Tyre and Sidon* unto Christ—from the coasts of sin to the land of the living—as calamity. When we are *vexed*, we *come out* ; when the wind blows, we presently bethink ourselves and *depart out of those coasts*. Gen. xii. 10.—*Farindon*.

V. 22.—The valley of tears brought me more sight of my God, more insight into myself, than ever the valley of visions ; more, than all duties and ordinances had done. viii. 24, 25 ; Ps. cxix. 71 ; Job. xxxiii. 19–30 ; xlii. 5, 6.—*Sam. Shaw*.

We find something of an expectation of the Messiah of the Jews in all parts of the world at this season. But the remarkable circumstance is this ; that this Syro-phenician idolatress must have looked for no partial deliverer of the Jewish nation, but for a general benefactor of all mankind in the person of the Jewish Messiah ; for, had He been to come for the particular benefit of the Jews only, this daughter of Canaan could have had no part or interest in *the Son of David*. S. John iv. 25 ; Eph. i. 9, 10 ; iii. 1, 6.—*Bp. Horsley*.

V. 25.—*Lord, help me*. With God, a publican goes beyond a Pharisee ; a sigh or a groan, that can not be uttered ; beyond a long prayer with ostentation. Care not how long, nor how loud, thy prayer be ; but how hearty. S. Luke xviii. 9–14.—*Bp. Henshawe*.

Then came she, &c. Jacob holds with his hands, when his thigh is lamed.—Gen. xxxii. 25, 26 ; Job. xiii. 15.—*Bp. Reynolds*.

V. 27.—*Truth, Lord*. Oh, rare example in a heathen of resignation to the will of God, of complacency and satis-

faction in the general arrangement of His Providence ! Would God, that men would imitate the humility of this pious Canaanite, that they would consider the scanty measure of the human intellect ; rest satisfied in the general belief of the Divine goodness and wisdom ; and wait for the event of things to clear up the things “hard to be understood” in the present constitution of the moral world, as well as in the Bible. Gen. xviii. 35 ; Ps. xcv. 1, 2 ; S. John xiii. 7 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.—*Bp. Horsley.*

We must brace our minds to the full extent of that great truth, that “No man hath seen God at any time.” Still, amid outward darkness and inward, amid a world going on, it seems, its own course, with no other laws than those, which God hath given to nature ; amidst all the doubts and perplexities of our own hearts, the deepest difficulties sitting hard beside the most Blessed truths ; still we must seek after the Lord with unabated faith, if so be that we may find Him.—Ps. iv. 7 ; Job. xiii. 15 ; Habak. iii. 17, 18.—*Dr. Arnold.*

V. 28.—Four things are required to justifying faith,—knowledge, assent, confidence, application : in all these four the faith of this woman was great.—*Edw. Leigh.*

We may observe that we have three ascending degrees of faith, manifesting itself in the breaking through of hindrances, which would keep from Christ ; in the paralytic (S. Mark ii. 4), the blind men at Jericho (S. Mark x. 48), and this woman of Canaan. The paralytic broke through the outward hindrances of things merely external ; blind Bartimæus through the hindrances, opposed by his fellow men ; and this woman, more heroically than all, through apparent hindrances even

from Christ Himself. These in their seeming weakness were the three mighty ones, not of David, but of David's Son, that broke through the hosts of the enemy, until they could draw living water from the wells of Salvation. 2 Sam. xxiii. 16 ; Heb. xi. 33-37.—*Abp. Trench.*

V. 32.—In His sufferings, He had trial of mercy, and “learned” to be merciful. His own hunger moved Him to work the miracle of the loaves ; for He said, “I have *compassion* on the multitude.” His poverty made Him an orator for the poor, and He begs with them to the end of the world ; for, when He became a “man of sorrows,” He became also a man of *compassion*. Ex. xxiii. 9 ; Heb. ii. 10-18.—*Farindon.*

Hark, O my soul, how graciously thy Redeemer considers His servants. He keeps account how long they have been with Him, and how far they are off from their own houses, and casting all together resolves to supply them, and with His speedy mercy prevents their wishes. O infinite Goodness ! How safely may our prayers expect Thy pity, while our wants alone are enough to move Thee, and draw from Thy tender bowels such soft and kind expressions ! S. Luke xxii. 28 ; S. John v. 6.—*Austin.*

V. 39.—The Fathers give various allegorical turns to this miracle. S. Augustine tells us that the *seven loaves* signified the sevenfold operations of the Holy Ghost ; the *four thousand men*, the Church established on the four Gospels ; the *seven baskets* of fragments, the perfection of the Church. But of this whole transaction we may well rest content with that golden key, given to us by the Lord Himself in the sixth chapter of S. John ; where with

the eyes of Faith we trace under the veil of this miracle the far greater mysteries of the Spiritual feast of Divine Love, the manner of our soul's food, of our body's blessed immortality in the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour. There, in the highest sense, His *compassion* is manifested. He places us, one by one, in the well ordered ranks of His Church. He blesses the material bread, so that it becomes, not multiplied, but spiritualized. We receive it from Him by the hands of His Ministers ; and then He sends us away, or graciously dismisses us, with that gift of Peace, which passeth all understanding, which endureth for ever.—*J. Ford.*

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 1.—The children of this world, the better to effectuate what they have resolved upon, are at a marvellous great unity among themselves. "They hold all together and keep themselves close" (Ps. lvi. 6). Herod and Pilate (S. Luke xxiii. 12), at some odds before, must now be made friends. *Pharisees and Sadducees*, sectaries of contrary opinion and notoriously factious against each other, will yet conspire to tempt Christ. The Epicureans and the Stoics, two sects of philosophers, of all others the most extremely distant and opposite in their tenets and doctrines, came with their joint forces at Athens to encounter Paul, and discountenance Christianity. Prov. i. 10–16 ; xi. 21 ; S. Mark xii. 13.—*Bp. Sanderson.*

Such a *sign*, as when Joshua arrested the course of the sun, or Samuel called down the thunder, or Isaiah made the shadow of the degrees to go down on the sun-dial. 2 Kings i. 10 ; John vi. 32 ; xiv. 8.—*Beza.*

V. 2.—*The face of the sky.* The beautiful system of sun, planets, and comets could have its origin in no other way, than by the purpose and command of an intelligent and powerful Being. He governs all things ; not as the soul of the world, but as the Lord of the Universe. He is not only "God," but "*Lord*," or Governor. We know Him only by His properties and attributes, by the wise

and admirable structure of things around us, and by their final causes ; we admire Him on account of His perfections ; we venerate and worship Him on account of His government. Ps. viii. 9 ; Acts xiv. 17.—*Sir Isaac Newton.*

V. 3.—Upon the Church there never yet fell tempestuous storm, the vapours whereof were not first noted to rise from coldness in affection and from backwardness of service towards God. xxiv. 12, 37, 38 ; Judges v. 8 ; S. Luke xviii. 8.—*Hooker.*

V. 4.—*The prophet Jonah*, as I may say, compensates for the absence of any direct Christian prediction, in what he delivers, by the typical prophecy, embodied in his own personal history. And, as he is the first and oldest of the Prophets, we perceive that the first image, the introductory representation, which meets us at the opening of the Prophetic Canon, when we explore it in a Christian sense, is that of the great fact of Christ's Resurrection. Ezek. xii. 6, 11 ; S. John ii. 19 ; Heb. xi. 17-19.—*Davison.*

V. 9, 10.—Whence is it, that the fragments in this latter miracle are fewer than in the former, although they, who ate, were not so many ? It is, either because the basket in this miracle is larger than in the former ; or, that by the point of difference they might remember the two several miracles. S. Mark viii. 19.—*S. Chrysostom.*

We ought to fix in our memories the lesser details, which belong to the works of God ; and we should take occasion from former mercies to hope for future. S. John iv. 52 ; Ps. cxliii. 4, 5 ; Rom. v. 6-11.—*Bengel.*

V. 13.—He must be *man*, that He may be capable of suffering ; and God, in order to impart an infinite value to His sufferings. He must be man, to humble Himself to the earth ; and God to raise us to heaven—man, that He may represent mankind, and stand in their stead ; and God that He may reconcile and propitiate the Divine justice. Isa. vii. 14–16 ; Zech. xiii. 7 ; Ps. lxxxv. 11 ; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.—*Rambach*.

V. 17.—Was St. Peter, a rock, on which the Church was to be founded ? Be it so ; but no less were the other Apostles (Rev. xxi. 10, 14 ; Eph. ii. 20). Equally the strength of the Church is settled upon them. Was St. Peter an architect of the spiritual house (as himself called the Church, 1 Peter ii. 5) ? So were also they (1 Cor. iii. 10). Were the Keys of the Church committed to him ? So also were they unto them. They had a power to open and shut it by effectual instruction and persuasion, by dispensation of the Sacraments, by exercise of Discipline, by exclusion of scandalous and heretical persons : whatever faculty the Keys did impart, the Apostles did use it in the foundation, guidance and government of the Church, and did (as the Fathers teach) impart it to those, whom they did in their stead constitute to feed and govern the Church. xviii. 18 ; John xx. 23 ; Eph. iv. 11 ; Acts xx. 28 ; 1 Pet. v. 2.—*Dr. Barrow*.

S. Peter and the Blessed Mary have alike suffered wrong from the unjust extremes of men's opinions, warped by prejudice or party feeling. They have been either unduly elevated, or unduly brought low. S. Peter had no separate and superior jurisdiction among the Apostles ; yet was he specially honoured. We are told that he

"stood up in the *midst* of the disciples" and "*with* the eleven;" not apart from them, not above them; but as one of their company, taking however the lead. The Keys were equally committed to all the Apostles; but Peter certainly had the first use of them. He it was, who to the Jew first, and afterwards to the Gentiles, opened "the door of faith, even of that same faith, which he expressed in his own noble Confession, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.* 1 S. Peter v. 1; Acts i. 15; ii. 14, 38; x. 44-48.—*J. Ford.*

V. 19.—The power of the Ministry of God translateth out of darkness into Glory; it raiseth men from the earth, and bringeth God Himself down from heaven: by blessing visible elements it maketh them invisible grace; it giveth daily the Holy Ghost; it hath to dispose of that Flesh, which was "given for the life of the world," and that Blood, which was poured out to redeem souls; when it poureth malediction on the heads of the wicked, they perish; when it revoketh the same, they revive. Oh wretched blindness, if we admire not so great power; more wretched, if we consider it aright, and, notwithstanding, imagine, that any, but God, can bestow it! 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 23; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.—*Hooker.*

V. 22.—He, that seemed a *rock*, even now through Satan's policy laid a *stone of offence*, for Christ to stumble at. Such is the weak constitution of grace; that it can well bear neither smiles nor frowns from God without a snare.—*Gurnall.*

Whom God loves most, the devil hates most. When the Voice from heaven said to Christ, "Thou art My

beloved Son," then came the devil to assault and tempt Him. Thus Peter, an eminent Apostle of Christ, after he had made such a glorious Confession of his faith, and had discovered more grace, than in all his lifetime before, suddenly after by an instigation from the devil began to rebuke Christ, counselling Him to spare Himself. iii. 17 ; iv. 1 ; vi. 12, 13.—*Chr. Love.*

V. 23.—*Get thee behind Me, Satan*, saith the Lord to Peter, thus commanding him to fall back into the rank of a disciple. But the Lord said to Satan (iv. 10), "*Get thee hence, Satan ; not behind Me, but far from Me.*" xxv. 41.—*Bengel.*

V. 24.—I think it will appear to a diligent reader of the Gospels, that our Saviour almost always followed up His invitations, given to great efforts of self-denial, and His recommendations and praises of them, with some cautionary words or actions, intimating humility and soberness of mind. . . . The promise to S. Peter that he should have "the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," was succeeded by the earnest warning *to take up the Cross and follow Christ*. As this led to the Transfiguration, the height of spiritual joy, so that again to the silence imposed on the high thoughts of the disciples by "setting a little child before them." (xvii. 1 ; xviii. 2 ; S. Mark ix. 36.) The series of lessons, begun in self-denial, was imperfect and came to nothing, unless so far as it was accompanied with humility. 1 Cor. xiii. 3 ; 2 Cor. xii. 7.—*J. Keble.*

Love the Cross of Christ, and be content to have your faith tried every day by some cross or other, as it pleaseth God to put on you. And, if God putteth no grievous

cross on you, let your brethren's cross be your cross ; which is a certain token of true brotherly love. Rom. ix. 1-3 ; Gal. vi. 2.—*J. Bradford.*

Every day deny yourself some satisfaction. Deny the eye all objects of mere curiosity ; the tongue everything, that may feed vanity or vent enmity ; the palate, what it most delights in (but this, not to be seen by others) ; the ears, by rejecting all flattery, all conversation that may corrupt the heart ; the body all delicateness, ease, and luxury, by bearing all inconveniences of life for the love of God—cold, hunger, restless nights, ill-health, the negligence of servants and friends, contempt, calumnies, our own failings, melancholy, and the pain we feel in overcoming the corruptions of nature. vii. 4 ; 1-Cor. ix. 24-27 ; xv. 31.—*Bp. Wilson.*

V. 25.—*Whosoever will save his life.* We cannot have this world, and Heaven too. Josh. xxiv. 14, 15 ; S. Luke xvi. 13, 25.—*J. Ford.*

V. 26.—I remember Chrysostom, speaking of the loss of a soul, saith, that the loss of a member of the body is nothing to it ; for saith he, " If a man lose an eye, ear, hand, or foot, there is another to supply its want." God hath not given us two souls, that, if one be lost, yet the other may be saved. xviii. 8, 9.—*Flavel.*

Nourish *thy soul* with good works. Give it peace in solitude ; get it strength in prayer ; make it wise with reading ; enlighten it by meditation ; make it tender with love ; sweeten it with humility ; humble it with patience ; enliven it with psalms and hymns, and comfort it with frequent reflections upon future glory.

Keep it in the presence of God, and teach it to imitate those guardian Angels, which, though they attend to human affairs and to the lowest of mankind, yet "always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven." 1 Tim. iv. 6 ; 1 Thess. v. 16-23.—*Wm. Law.*

V. 27.—As the doctrine of Christ's Person was followed immediately by the doctrine of the Cross, so to this succeeds the doctrine of glory. xxvi. 29 ; 1 S. Peter i. 11 ; v. 1.—*Bengel.*

This is an inexpressible comfort to us, that our Blessed Saviour thus mingles His two Kingdoms, that He makes the Kingdom of grace and the Kingdom of Glory all one ; the Church and heaven all one ; and assures us that, if we see Him in this His glass, in His Ordinance, in His Kingdom of grace, we have already begun to see Him, *face to face*, in His Kingdom of Glory : if we see Him, as He *looks* in His Word and Sacraments, in His Kingdom of grace, we have begun to see Him, as He *is*, in His essence in the Kingdom of Glory. v. 8 ; xxvi. 29 ; Gen. xxviii. 17 ; Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.—*Dr. Donne.*

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 1.—The Transfiguration appears to have been a typical representation, which set forth by anticipation the Resurrection and Regeneration of the flesh, and which was shown in our Lord's Glorified Body, as "the first begotten of the dead," "the first-born among many brethren." Phil. iii. 21.—*Is. Williams.*

Such shall He appear unto them, who watch for Him, after *six days* of the week. , Isa. xl. 31.—*Origen.*

V. 3.—Let the shadows depart: follow the light of the Gospel. The Lord had witnesses on all sides; out of heaven, the voice of the Father; out of Paradise, Elias; Moses, from the lower regions; among men, the Apostles; that "at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth," &c. Phil. ii. 10, 11.—*Remigius.*

V. 4.—When once the soul by contemplation is raised to any right apprehension of the Divine perfections and the foretastes of celestial bliss, how will this world and all that is in it vanish and disappear before his eyes? With what holy disdain will he look down upon things, which are the highest objects of other men's ambitious desires? All the splendour of courts all the pageantry of greatness will no more dazzle his eyes than the faint lustre of a glow-worm will trouble the eagle, after it hath been beholding the sun. Neh. vi. 3; John iv. 32.—*Scougal.*

V. 5.—It was not without meaning that the Holy Spirit here appeared *in a bright cloud*, and then (at Jordan) in the form of a dove ; for he, who preserves in simplicity of heart the faith once received, will in due time behold it in the visions of truth, clear and undisguised. vi. 22 ; Hab. ii. 2-4 ; Col. ii. 6.—*Bede*.

We need to be taught over and over again, in regard even to fundamental truths. Peter and the Apostles had just made their confession of Christ, that He was *the Son of the living God*. Here they are vouchsafed an audible confirmation of that great verity, as an evidence, needful to their establishment in it : yet at this time they had no understanding of the disappearance of Moses and Elias, the abrogation of the Law, and the sealing up of prophecy in Christ. From the proposal of erecting *three tabernacles*, or temporary stations, Peter seems to have been dreaming of an earthly kingdom, in which the Law-giver and the Prophet were, under the Messiah-King, to bear their several parts. S. Luke i. 4 ; 1 S. John v. 13 ; Acts i. 6.—*J. Ford*.

V. 8.—As the Apostles, at first, *saw Moses and Elias talking with Jesus*, but, at the second view, when the cloud was withdrawn, and He had spoken to them, *saw none but Jesus only* ; so such passages, as I am speaking of, in the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, at first survey, appear very distant things ; but, upon a second inspection, and the access of more light from an attentive collation of things, they do all, as it were, vanish into Christ. ii. 9 ; xxvi. 56 ; S. John i. 29, 55 ; Heb. xii. 1, 2.—*R. Boyle*.

V. 9.—We must observe that *places* always *accord* with the *actions* done there. The Lord prays, is Transfigured, discloses the deep things of His Majesty to His disciples on a mountain. Descending to the plain, He is met by the crowd and assailed with the groans of the wretched. On high, He opens to His disciples the mysteries of His Kingdom; below, He reproves the people for the sin of unbelief. On high, He discovers to those, fitted to hear it, the voice of His Father; below, He casts out evil spirits from the possessed. The same, who ascends for sake of those, who were qualified for such a favour, fails not now to come down for the relief of others. He comforts, teaches, corrects those, who are still mere novices in the flesh, as if He stooped down low to seek them. But, as for the more advanced, “whose conversation is in heaven,” them He glorifies by lifting Himself up higher, teaches them more familiarly heavenly things, and inculcates truths, such as the multitude are incapable even of hearing. viii. 1; 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2; 2 Tim. ii. 15.—*Bede*.

V. 12.—*Done unto Him, &c.* Such are the wonderful and precious works of God. Men at the very time, when they oppose His will and commandment, do in *fact* accomplish it. Ps. cxlviii. 8; Acts ii. 23; iv. 27, 28.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 16.—When second causes answer our expectations and desires, we are seldom wont to look beyond them. We never regard the fountain, till the cisterns begin to fail. Mark v. 26, 27.—*Scougal*.

V. 20.—Ye have heard in the primitive Church of a *grain of faith removing mountains*; and, believe me, all

miracles are not yet out-dated. The work of Regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual life on one "dead in trespasses and sins," the making of a carcass walk, the natural old man to spring again and to move spiritually, is as great a miracle as that. Job xiv. 4 ; Eph. i. 19, 20.—*Dr. Hammond.*

V. 21.—A wise and religious exercise of *fastings*, and other acts of severity and self-denial, cuts off the luxuriations of nature ; they take away the matter, which the tempter's suggestions work upon ; they put us in a better condition of standing our ground, and gaining the fort within, by starving out the enemy's forces, that lie entrenched there. v. 27-30 ; Ezek. x. 49 ; Rom. viii. 13.—*Dean Stanhope.*

V. 24.—*Doth not your master, &c.* We do a great deal of harm, when we disappoint the expectations entertained concerning us (S. John xi. 56). Nothing is more fatal to the good conduct of people in a lower station, than the suspicion, which they sometimes entertain, of the sincerity of those above them. S. John vii. 12 ; 2 Cor. vii. 11 ; xii. 16.—*Dr. Arnold.*

V. 27.—*Lest we should offend them.* When there is any question about money, worldly-minded men have a peculiar facility in taking offence at the conduct of the godly. Gen. xxx. 12-20 ; 1 Sam. xii. 3 ; S. Luke xi. 4 ; Acts xx. 33 ; 2 Cor. xii. 16-19 ; 1 Tim. iii. 3.—*Bengel.*

The zeal of our Lord was wise, temperate, and substantial ; such, as did not spend itself in a furious contention for, or opposition to, things of an indifferent nature ; but it quietly submitted to the customs of His country and the Church, in which He was born and

educated ; and all His invectives were against hypocrisy and immorality, which were the only things, to which His noble and generous temper could never be reconciled. xi. 29 ; xii. 19 ; xxi. 12.—*Dr. J. Scott.*

O Glorious Master of peace and charity, who, though indeed the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, yet wert pleased to decline the claim of Thy privilege, and rather do a miracle, than not prevent a scandal ; be Thou the King of our souls, and may all we have, and are, pay tribute to Thy Majesty ! Make us, O Lord, not only for fear, but conscience, perform our duty to the public magistrate ; and learn to wave even our own right for love of peace and good example to others.—*Austin.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSE 1.—*At the same time*—namely, when they saw that the same tribute was paid for the Lord and for S. Peter. S. Luke xxii. 24.—*Isid. Clarius.*

It is a common error amongst men to judge of spiritual things by carnal, of Eternal by temporary. Wheresoever we walk, our own shadow goes before us, and we use the language and dialect of the world in the school of Christ. We talk of superiority, and power, and dominion in that Kingdom, wherein we must be “Priests,” and “Kings,” too, by being *good*, not *great*. S. John iii. 4; iv. 15; Acts viii. 18, 19; 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.—*Farindon.*

V. 3.—To become like *little children* in humbleness, is not in our power; it is the work of God’s hand and help. Yet to show that we must, as we may, work with His prevenient grace, Christ adds, “Whosoever *humbleth himself*,” according to the saying of S. Gregory; “The good, which a man doth, is both the work of God, and the work of man; of God, as being the Author, in giving grace; of man, as being actor, in using grace; yet so, that he co-operate *with grace by grace*.” xii. 13; S. John vi. 27; Acts xxvi. 18, 20; 1 Cor. xv. 10; S. Jude 21, 24.—*Dean Boys.*

V. 8.—*Cut them off.* Use sin, as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you: it is your murderer, and the murderer of the whole world. Use it, therefore,

as a murderer should be used : kill it, before it kill you ; and, though it bring you to the grave, as it did your Head, it shall not be able to keep you there. You love not death ; love not the cause of death. v. 29, 30 ; Col. iii. 5.—*R. Baxter.*

V. 9.—*It is better for thee, &c.* If you do a good action with trouble to yourself, the trouble passes away, the good survives. If you do evil with pleasure to yourself, the pleasure passes away, the evil survives. Isa. iii. 10, 11.—*Musonius.*

V. 10.—*Their Angels.* What great and special love must the Father bear to the innocent state of childhood, and what tender regard to its helplessness and inexperience, since *their* Angels keep the watch in His nearest Presence. In sweet harmony with this mystery, our Lord commended, first of all, to S. Peter “the *lambs* of His flock,” placing them before “the sheep.” Children should be taught to know and feel their Blessed privilege ; that they may preserve undefiled the white and spotless garment of their Baptism. They should be early taught to understand what that meaneth ; “I heartily thank our Heavenly Father that He hath called me to this state of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” ii. 16 ; xix. 14 ; xi. 25 ; Acts ii. 39 ; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14 ; Col. i. 12–14.—*J. Ford.*

V. 11.—*Is come.* He comes to men, saith S. Bernard ; that is, with the offer of His salvation. He comes *into* men ; that is, by His Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts of those, who accept His salvation. He comes *against* men ; that is, to punish those, who will not “have Him

to reign over them." These distinctions would also apply to the past, to the present, and to the future. He came once in the flesh ; He comes now in the Spirit ; He will come in the visible Glory of His Eternal and Everlasting Kingdom. He is therefore rightly called (orig. Gr.) *The Comer*. xi. 3 ; xxi. 9 ; xxvi. 64 ; Gen. xxix. 10 ; S. John i. 11, 15, 27 ; 1 S. John v. 6.—*J. Ford*.

The parallel passage (S. Luke xv. 4–7) would seem to apply to the *adult* ; of whom it is, therefore, required that they "repent," whereas here it is simply said of the *little ones*, that they are *gone astray*. In both cases, our Christian duty towards them is the same ; not to *despise them*, but, after the pattern of *the Angels*, yea, of the *Son of man* Himself, to "seek to do them good." Ps. xxxiv. 11.—*J. Ford*.

V. 12.—Oh, the wonderful condescension of God thus to seek ! Oh, the exceeding honour of man to be thus sought for ! Gen. iii. 8, 9 ; Titus ii. 11.—*S. Bernard*.

V. 15.—*Between thee and him alone*. Reproof and good counsel must be like our alms—in *secret* ; so as, if possible, one ear, or hand, may not be conscious to the other. It is the best remedy, that is least seen, and most felt. Ps. cxli. 5 ; Prov. xxv. 9.—*Bp. Hall*.

Never speak of any one's faults to others, till you have first spoken of them to the offender himself. vii. 12 ; Gen. iv. 6 ; xii. 18.—*P. Henry*.

V. 17.—The true Church hath *three* marks, or notes, whereby it is known ; pure and sound doctrines, the Sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's holy institution, and the right use of Ecclesiastical discipline.

This description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrines of the ancient Fathers ; so that none may justly find fault therewith. Acts ii. 46 ; v. 11, 42. — *Homilies*.

The mercy of the Father, the slain victim of the Son, and the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, are the peculiar property of the Church. Acts ii. 47 ; Eph. iii. 10.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 18.—*Verily I say unto you, &c.* (Confer xvi. 18.) In many passages of the Scriptures Peter appears, as the representative of the Church ; especially in that place, where it is said, “ I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven.” Did Peter then receive these keys, and Paul not receive them ? Did Peter receive them, and John and James not receive them, and the rest of the Apostles ? Or, are not these keys lodged in the Church ? But, since Peter represented the Church, that, which was given to him, to the Church it was given. Acts xv. 23 ; 1 Cor. v. 4 ; 2 Cor. ii. 10.—*S. Augustine*.

V. 19.—*If you shall agree* (as it were, in a symphony. Gr. orig.) Prayer is the sweet harmony of the soul in God’s ears. vi. 9 ; Isa. vi. 3.—*Abp. Leighton*.

He, that considers, will find that particular men are not fit to be entrusted to offer prayer in public, with their private spirit to God for the people, in such solemnities, in matters of so great a concernment, where the honour of God, the benefit of the people, the interest of kingdoms, the being of a Church, the unity of minds, the conformity of practice, the truth of persuasion, and the Salvation of souls, are so much concerned, as they are in the public

prayers of a whole national Church. An unlearned man is not to be trusted ; and a wise man dare not trust himself. He, that is ignorant, *cannot* ; he, that is knowing, *will* not. Eccles. v. 1, 2.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

I do highly approve, that there should be a certain Form of Prayer and Ecclesiastical rites, from which no Pastor should be allowed to deviate in his Ministrations ; as well to make provision thereby for some people's ignorance and unskilfulness, as to make the consent of all Churches among themselves more plainly manifest ; and, moreover, that a certain step may be taken against the unsettled levity of such, as' delight in innovations. S. Luke xi. 2 ; 1 Cor. xiv. 33 ; xi. 16.—*Calvin.*

V. 20.—*Where two or three, &c.* This promise was, no doubt, given, as a special encouragement to the promoting of Unity and peace in the Church ; and yet, in the hands of the sectarian, it is so misapplied and so perverted, as to promote and even justify, in his conceit, every kind and degree of religious discord. The promise was made to *the Twelve* ; all religionists now lay claim to it. It was made to *Unity* in faith and love ; it is now pleaded by sectarians in their defence, when they separate themselves from the Apostolick Communion, and even disagree among themselves. A like unhappy fate has befallen the doctrine of Episcopacy. The Bishop was ordained to be the centre of Unity, the guardian of sound doctrine and of salutary discipline ; but it is on the very question of Episcopacy that thousands take occasion to bring in strife. Oh, that these things were more deeply and more calmly considered ! Ps. cxxii ; cxxiii ; Gal. v. 15.—*J. Ford.*

V. 21.—Say not, I have sinned too often to be forgiven. The number of our sins cannot exceed His mercy. If we have sinned a thousand times, let us confess as oft ; and He, that hath commanded us to forgive our brother, “as oft as he shall repent,” will certainly forgive us. Ps. xix. 12.—*Bp. Sparrow.*

A self-searching Christian is made up of humility and meekness. If thou wouldst find much peace and favour with God and man, be very low in thine own eyes. Forgive thyself little ; and others, much. 1 Cor. xi. 31.—*Abp. Leighton.*

V. 26.—It is good to observe how the answers of prayers have frequently far exceeded the desires of the creature (Eph. iv. 20). The debtor in the Gospel desired forbearance only for a little time : his master *forgave him the debt*. The spouse, the Church, would be “drawn after Christ ;” but the King brought her into His chambers. Gen. xlviii. 14 ; S. John iv. 52 ; 2 Chron. i. 12 ; S. Mark x. 13, 16 ; Eph. iii. 20 ; Ps. cxvii. 2.—*Dr. Manton.*

V. 27.—Hath any wounded thee with injuries ? Meet them with patience. Hasty words rankle the wound ; soft language dresses it ; forgiveness cures it ; and oblivion takes away the scar (Ps. cxli. 5). It is more noble by silence to avoid an injury, than by argument to overcome it. Prov. xv. 1 ; xxv. 15 ; 1 S. Peter ii. 20.—*F. Quarles.*

V. 28.—*Laid hands on him, &c.* Let every one, that is struck with horror at the mention of a man void of pity (v. 33), that feels resentment at the name of oppres-

sion, and melts with sorrow at the voice of misery, remember that those, who have now lost all these sentiments, were originally formed with passions, and instinct, and reason, like his own. Let him reflect that he, who now stands most firmly, may fall by negligence; and that negligence arises from security. Let him, therefore, observe by what gradations men sink into perdition, by what insensible deviations they wander from the paths of virtue, till they are at length scarce able to return. 2 Sam. xii. 2; Prov. xix. 16; 2 Kings viii. 13.—*Dr. Johnson.*

V. 32.—*After that he had called him.* Dr. Hammond gave this as a general rule, *Never to reprove in anger*, or the least appearance of it. If the passion was real, *that* then was an evident fault, and the guilty person most unfit to be a judge; if it were resemblance only, yet even that would be so like to guilt, as probably to divert the offender from the consideration of his failance, to fasten on his monitor, and make him think he was chid, not because *he* was in fault, but because the other was angry. xx. 24, 25; Gen. iii. 8; Levit. xiii. 5, 6.—*Dr. Fell (Life of Dr. Hammond).*

V. 33.—It is infinitely more honourable to forgive a wrong, than to revenge it. The one makes thee like to God; the other makes thee like the devil. It is the chiefest excellency, by which God delights to be set forth (Isaiah xliii. 25; Micah vii. 18). . . And certainly men can never so much triumph over thee by their injuries, as thou mayest over them by forgiveness.—*Bp Hopkins.*

V. 34.—The man, who does not start up quick at the sound of such thunder, is not asleep, but dead. Zeph. i. 14–16; Eph. v. 14.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 35.—There is an apprehension and presentiment natural to mankind, that we ourselves shall, one day or other, be dealt with, as we deal with others; and a peculiar acquiescence in, and feeling of, the equity and justice of this equal distribution. S. James ii. 13.—*Bp. Butler.*

My Saviour, inspire me with the true apprehension of Thy infinite Love towards me, who descendedst from the top of Thy Majesty to the lowest degree of servility, didst debase Thyself to exalt me, cloathedst Thyself with mortality to invest me with immortality, wert poor to enrich me, enduredst the reproach of Thine enemies to reconcile me to Thy most justly incensed Father. Could I but truly conceive any part of this immense Love, I could not but return more to *Thee*, to *Thine*. I should then forget injuries from my weak brethren, love my most malicious enemies, hate none, but those, that undervalue this great goodness (Ps. cxxxix. 21); whereas now mine affections are guided by my personal interests.—*Lord Capel.*

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 3.—*The Pharisees, &c.* See their malice ; for they ask their question, just as if the Lord had never spoken on the subject (v. 31, 32), supposing, forsooth, that He had forgotten His own words. S. John ix. 27.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 4.—*At the beginning.* The Scripture has divided the ages of the world into *three* grand periods ; the first of which is called *the beginning*, whose date begins at the Creation, and takes in all the generations, 'till the establishment of the Law of Moses ; as when Christ says, "*From the beginning it was not so.*" The second is called "*the old time*" (v. 21), or the time of the Law, when the people of God were "*under the elements of the world,*" and "*the oldness of the letter.*" The third and last period is the time of the Messiah, when the Law was fulfilled, "*and all things became new ;*" and this period from its first announcement to its conclusion is meant by "*the latter days,*" "*the last time.*" Heb. ix. 26.—*Bp. Horne.*

V. 5.—The bond of wedlock is the closest of all bonds ; it excels them, but dissolves them not. The Decalogue is younger than this Institution. Husband and wife were before child and parent. Sinai must yield to Paradise.—*Dr. R. Clerke.*

V. 8.—To the Jew was given the command, so well suited to his state, as a child, of a tiny Circumcision in the flesh : we have our whole bodies Baptized, because in

us there must be a complete Circumcision of the whole man. xiii. 33 ; Rom. vi. 3-7 ; Col. ii. 10-14.—*S. Bernard.*

One of the prophets (Malachi ii. 14-16) had given a clear intimation that God approved not the permission so allowed ; but would draw the domestic charities into stricter bonds of union and severity.—*Davison.*

From the beginning. The Priests, whose office it is to preserve the Divine Law, should refer, whenever truth may be at all unsettled, to the Divine origin in the Gospel, and to Apostolic tradition. 1 Cor. xi. 1, 2, 23 ; xv. 3 ; 1 S. John ii. 7.—*S. Cyprian.*

V. 12.—My God, in every state make me learn to be content, since in every state I may save my soul. Marriage is good, and single life is better ; but that, which is fittest, is best for me. Oh, make me wisely choose the way I should go ; and then without looking back, go on, 'till I come to Thee. Let me not seek undue redresses of the troubles incident to my condition, nor vainly amuse myself with desire of change. Marriage is nothing, and single life nothing, but as they furnish means, or remove impediments, towards attaining the Kingdom of Heaven. vi. 33, 34 ; 1 Cor. vii. 28-31 ; Phil. iv. 11-14 ; and iii. 13.—*Austin.*

V. 13.—Mother Church has contrived for infants the feet of others, that they may come ; the hearts of others, that they may believe ; the tongues of others, that they may confess : for, as they are oppressed with a spiritual sickness through the sin of another, so their cure may come to them by the means of another, confessing for them.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 14.—*Suffer little children, &c.* Christ doth not forbid them to be baptized, which are *not* taught ; but commands them, that are *taught*, to be baptized (xxviii. 19, 20). Children of the faithful must be baptized upon another ground. They are not incredulous, they have no actual unbelief ; neither can they resist the grace of the Spirit, or make themselves incapable thereof. Secondly, they are in God's Covenant, by means of their parents, whom, when God received into the Church, He received them with this promise—"I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed." Gen. xvii. 7 ; Acts ii. 29.—*Bp. Lake.*

Suffer them to come ! Why, we cannot put them into Christ's arms, where He sits in glory—how shall they come unto Him, then, unless we present them in the Sacrament ? Besides, what follows presseth further. *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven* : it is not theirs by such right, as the Angels hold their place in heaven ; because the Angels are free from sin : and how can it be theirs, since they are dead in Adam, unless it be theirs by the seal of some Covenant ? And that is the fountain of Regeneration. I call them regenerate in that Sacrament ; for, as Christ *Blessed them*, when He took them in His own arms, so He blesseth them in our arms ; and, if they be blest, they are regenerate. Eph. i. 3.—*Bp. Hacket.*

V. 17.—*Why callest thou Me good ?* The interpretation of sayings is to be gathered from the causes of their being said ; because the matter is not subject to the words, but the words to the matter.—*S. Hilary.*

Keep the Commandments. Christ declared that the Laws of God be the very way, that doth lead to Ever-

lasting Life. . . so that this is to be taken for a most true lesson, taught by Christ's own mouth, that the works of the Moral Commandments of God be the very true works of faith, which lead to the Blessed life to come. v. 17-21 ; Rev. xxii. 14.—*Homilies*.

V. 18.—*Which ?* All the Commandments are negative, except the fourth and fifth ; which may easily imply that we are fitter to be weeded, than to have any good fruits implanted in us. xv. 19.—*Dean Pearce*.

The wisdom of the Scriptures teacheth us to judge and denominate men religious, according to the works of the Second Table ; because those of the First are often counterfeit, and practised in hypocrisy. Rom. ii. 21, 22 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.—*Lord Bacon*.

V. 20.—The wise man considers, what he wants ; and the fool, what he abounds in.—*Addison*.

We have special cause to caution our people against two very prevalent and fatal obstacles to the reception of the Gospel—mere feelings, and mere morals. Both seem to be exemplified in the sad case of this young Ruler. xiii. 20 ; S. Luke xviii. 10 (S. Mark x. 17 “running.”)—*J. Ford*.

V. 21.—*If thou wilt be perfect, &c.* Long experience convinces me that no mistake is more common, or *fatal*, than too hastily encouraging persons under serious impressions to think that they have already passed a saving change, and that all is now well. Our compassion for persons under concern for their salvation often operates in this manner ; but a skilful surgeon is always afraid of a hasty cure. Jer. vi. 14 ; Eccles. iv. 16-19.—*Th. Scott*.

V. 22.—When Christ hitteth him home, and presseth upon his particular corruption, this nippeth him in the head, and struck cold to his heart. He *went away sorrowful*. And ever mark it, in something, or other, the hypocrite betrayeth himself, what he is ; if not to the observation of others, yet at least sufficiently to the conviction of his own heart, if he would not be wanting to himself in the due search and trial of it. xxiii. 24 ; S. Mark vi. 20 ; S. Luke xiii. 32.—*Bp. Sanderson*.

Grief and discontent have generally their foundation in desire ; so that whosoever can obtain the sovereignty over his desire will be master of his happiness. xxvi. 39 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.—*C. Howe*.

V. 24.—*A camel*, or, as some read “a cable.” A cable, being undone thread by thread, may go through a needle’s eye ; so, if the covetous rich man untwine his wretched thoughts, and become rich in good works, he may possess the Kingdom of Heaven. S. Luke xvi. 9 ; xviii. 22 ; xix. 8–10 ; 1 Tim. vi. 17–19.—*Dean Boys*.

V. 25.—*Who then can be saved ?* said the disciples ; for, if all are not rich, all *would* be ; which comes to very near the same thing. Our Saviour answers *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*. The Salvation of any man is a miracle ; for he is “*saved, as by fire*” (1 Cor. iii. 15), and only as “a new creature” (Gal. vi. 15), which God alone can make. There is here, therefore, no hyperbole. A man must be made very little, at least in his own eyes, before he can “enter in at the strait gate.” Sin, but especially pride, swells him to the size of a *camel*, and none but the Holy Spirit can reduce him to the thinness of a *thread*. v. 1 ; 1 S. Peter iv. 17, 18 ; Phil. iv. 13.—*P. Skelton*.

V. 27.—What was this *all*, but some old boat and a few rotten torn nets ; for these were now in the mending (iv. 21). Was this that *all* ? Yea, S. Peter left more too at this time than Alexander the Great could desire ; for Peter left the love of the world for the love of Christ, which was more and of more worth than many worlds. The Apostles indeed, saith S. Augustine, left not much ; but yet, look what they were *willing* to leave for the love of Christ, and we shall find it more than many kingdoms. By this example of the Apostles we learn to forsake *three* things for the love of Christ—by their *nets*, the pleasures of the flesh, which are wont to take men and snare them ; by the *ship*, the riches of the world, which doth carry us away from the haven of true rest—by their *father* and *mother*, those things, that are nearest and dearest to us : all these we must leave for the love of Christ ; yea, and ourselves also. But how can this be ? As thus, saith S. Gregory : we must leave ourselves, as sin hath made us, and stick unto Him, by whom we are made by grace. vi. 24 ; viii. 19–22 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 22, 23 ; 1 Kings xix. 21.—*Sutton*.

What shall we have therefore ? No people have more reason to be afraid of the approaches of pride than those, who have made some advances in a pious life. For pride can grow, as well upon our virtues, as our vices, and steals upon us on all occasions. vi. 1, 5 ; xx. 22 ; xxvi. 33–35 ; S. Luke xv. 29.—*Wm. Law*.

V. 28.—The more we lose here, the greater joy we shall have there ; the more we suffer, the greater triumph. For corruptible dross, we shall find incorruptible treasures ; for gold, Glory ; for silver, solace without end ; for earthly

houses, Eternal palaces ; mirth without measure, pleasure without pain, felicity endless—in sum, we shall have God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. xxvi. 8–13 ; Heb. x. 34 ; xi. 26, 35.—*John Bradford.*

V. 30.—In this spiritual journey, our Saviour noteth it, that *many of the first*, that outstripped their fellows, *shall be last*, when the *last shall be first*. How far was Judas, at first, before Nicodemus ? Nicodemus came closely and by stealth to Christ, and was only a night-professor ; Judas followed Him openly in the day, in the sight of all men. When Nicodemus was but a slow scholar, scarce capable of the first elements of Christianity, as, namely, of the doctrine of Regeneration, Judas was a forward and zealous preacher. And yet, at last, Nicodemus, that was *last*, became *first* ; and Judas, that was *first*, became *last*. When Judas did treacherously betray Christ in the night, he did faithfully profess Him in the day ; and when Judas' great faith was turned into hellish despair, when he went and hung himself, then did Nicodemus's little faith become so strong and bold, that he durst openly beg, and honourably bury, the Body of Jesus. He, that runs over eagerly at the first beginning of his race, quickly runs himself out of breath, and cannot possibly hold out. xiii. 20, 21 ; 1 Kings xx. 11 ; Ps. lxxviii. 10 ; S. John xix. 39.—*Dr. Dyke.*

Many placed antithetically to *every one* (v. 29). Perhaps it may be intimated here, that that very "young man," from being among *the last*, might reappear among *the first*. xxi. 29.—*Bengel.*

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 1.—*In the morning.* Rise in the morning, *determinately*, without making excuses. Our bodies are lazy servants, too apt to deceive us : if you readily listen to them, you are foolish. Rise *quickly*, without delay. The reprobate will be slow to quit their graves at the sound of the trumpet, “ Arise, ye dead : ” the Elect will spring joyfully from their graves. Rise *religiously* with pious ejaculations at intervals ; it is thus that the birds sing unto God. So begin the day, as if it were the first, or the last, of your life. Prov. viii. 17 ; Gen. xxii. 3 ; Pa. cxix. 147.—*Newmayrus.*

Mortify your sin betimes ; for else you will hardly mortify it at all. Remember that the snail outwent the eagle, because she set out betimes. Prov. i. 28 ; S. Mark i. 35.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 3.—Idleness is bad any where, but worst in the *market*, where so many are at work before thy eyes ; whose care for their souls both adds to thy sin, and will, another day, be thy shame. Acts xx. 34, 45 ; Heb. xii. 1.—*Gurnall.*

V. 7.—*Because no man hath hired us.* There is no man, but hath *a soul* ; and, if he will carefully attend to that, he need not complain for want of business. S. John vii. 6 ; Phil. ii. 12.—*Lord Bacon.*

There is some virtue, or other, to be always exercised, whatever happens ; either patience, or thanksgiving, love

or fear, moderation or humility, charity or contentedness. S. John vii. 6 ; 2 Peter i. 5-11.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

Whoever labours not *with God* is idle, how busy soever he seems to be in the world. S. John xv. 5 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58.—*J. Hales.*

Men talk of *their* killing time. Alas ! it is time, that is killing them.—*J. Ford.*

V. 8.—*When even was come.* There is not such a thing in religion, as a saving trade of godliness. Some men in their worldly trade at the year's end can say they have neither got, nor lost ; but thou canst not say thus at the day's end. Thou art at night better, or worse, than thou wast in the morning.—*Gurnall.* .

Though the *same penny* be given to every labourer, yet we are not from thence to infer that the rewards in the Kingdom of Heaven are all alike. God, and Christ, and the same Eternal life, it is true, shall be communicated to all, that enter there. But, as the same sun is more clearly beheld by the eagle than by other birds, and as the same fire more warms them, that are near it, than the more remote from it ; so it is here, in Eternal life, among the Blessed, that see God and Christ. One shall more clearly see, and more highly and delectably rejoice than another, according to the different capacities of the several recipients. S. John xiv. 2 ; 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42 ; Eph. i. 15-19.—*Bellarmino.*

V. 10.—If I am not so happy, as I desire, it is well I am not so miserable, as I deserve. I have received much more good, than ever I have done ; and done more evil, than I have ever suffered. Micah vii. 9 ; Sam. iii. 22 ; Ps. ciii. 10.—*Palmer.*

V. 13.—S. Bernard makes the following judicious and beautiful remark on S. Paul's assured expectation of receiving "a crown of righteousness" from "the righteous Judge." "There is therefore a 'crown of righteousness,' such as Paul expects; but it is not of his own righteousness, but of the righteousness of God; for it is a righteous thing to pay what one owes; and God is in our debt because of His own most gracious promise." Gen. xviii. 25; 1 S. John i. 9; Heb. vi. 10.—*J. Ford.*

V. 14.—To countervail the fault of delay, there are, in the latest repentance, oftentimes the surest tokens of sincere dealing. God respecteth not so much what time is spent, as what truth is shewn, in repentance. xxi. 31; 2 Chron. xxxii. 12, 13, 18, 19; S. Luke xxiii. 43.—*Hooker.*

V. 15.—*Self*, remember, was the worst seed in Adam's apple. Toward God, it is self-will, which is rebellion; towards man, it is self-love, which is hard-heartedness. It was to root out this evil *Self* from us, and to put Love in its room, that Christ died, and the Holy Ghost comes. Let not that death and that coming be in vain for you. But covet, since you must covet, with a *godly* covetousness; and cease not to complain, cease not to cry out, weary the ears of God with prayers, until He frees you from all selfishness, and from that worst mask of it, a grudging and *evil eye*. Lev. xix. 17, 18; 1 Sam. xviii. 6-11; 2 Cor. xii. 20; S. James v. 9.—*A. W. Hare.*

V. 16.—*Many be called, but few chosen.* None of the workmen are rejected; for all *laboured*. The meaning of this Divine aphorism, as spoken in connection with this

parable, may receive some light from S. Luke vi. 13. "He *called* unto Him His disciples, and of them He *chose* twelve, whom also He named Apostles." Some are *called* to the place of ordinary Christians; but others for their peculiar fitness, as well as by the peculiar grace of God, are *chosen* for stations of higher trust, honour, and responsibility: *many* of the former are found, *few* of the latter, in the Church of Christ. It is obvious that the same words at xxii. 14 will not bear this construction. 2 Sam. xxiii. 19, 23; 1 Cor. i. 26, 27.—*J. Ford.*

Nothing but humility can either keep *the first* from being *last*; or draw down that mercy on *the last*, which shall make them *first*. Rom. xi. 20, 21.—*Quesnel.*

Come, let us all *to work*, and every one mind his own business. Let us not lose our day in idleness, nor distract our diligence with repining at the advantages of others. God is our absolute Lord, and may "do with His own," as He pleases. If we began our repentance late, let us quicken our diligence; if we had the happiness to be called early, let us not grow remiss in His service, lest we be outstript by the other's zeal, and shamed in our slower progress, and justify God, not only in His equalling them, but setting them before us; and, instead of being *first*, be made *last*—Oh, that it be not quite shut out of the Kingdom of God! S. Luke xxii. 28; Gal. vi. 9.—*Austin.*

V. 19.—He had before, once and again, predicted His sufferings in a general way: now He speaks of *mockings*, *scourgings*, and the *cross*. xxvi. 2.—*Bengel.*

V. 20.—Our Heavenly Father always sends his children the things they ask, or better things. He answers their

petitions in kind, or in kindness ; but, while we think only of ease, He consults our profit. We are urgent about the body, He is about the soul ; we call for present comfort, He considers our everlasting rest ; and therefore, when He sends not the very things we ask, He hears us by sending greater, than we can "ask or think." vii. 9, 12 ; S. John ii. 10 ; Heb. xii. 9, 10.—*R. Cecil.*

V. 22.—*The Cup ; the Baptism.* The mention of both is suitably introduced ; for they, who receive the Sacraments, share in the Baptism, and in the Cup of the Lord. The Baptism of Christ, and our Baptism, and the Holy Supper, are closely allied with the death and passion both of Christ, and of ourselves. 1 Cor. xii. 13 ; Rom. viii. 20 ; Eph. ii. 5, 6.—*Bengel.*

It is by making us the offer of this *cup of His sufferings*, that the Lord proves our faith. It was by this cup that the unsoundness of the stony-ground hearers, whose first religious professions were so promising, was detected and exposed (xiii. 21). Now, in this, as in many more obvious respects—(the parallel is ably drawn by Pascal in his Chap. on Scripture types and figures)—might not Joseph have typified our Blessed Lord ? for Joseph first drank of the cup himself, and then passed it on for the trial of His brethren ; "Is not this it, in which my Lord drinketh ? and whereby indeed he divineth" (*maketh trial*, margin.) Consider this remark in its application also to the Lord's Supper, the "cup of Salvation." Ps. lxxxi. 8 ; Gen. xxii. 1, 2 ; xlv. 5 ; 1 Cor. xi. 23–27.—*J. Ford.*

V. 24.—How soon did they forget "the evil eye," condemned by the householder in the last spoken parable

(v. 15.)! How great is our frailty! How great too is God's forbearance! Surely, we have never more need to watch and to pray, than after we have heard solemn warnings, though, it may be, addressed to others S. John xxi. 19, 20.—*J. Ford.*

V. 25.—*Jesus called them unto Him.* This *calling* of them indicates deliberation and gentleness, in the difficult business of reproving another's sin. To express the same dispositions of mind the same terms are employed (xviii. 32) in the parable of the unmerciful servant; *Then his Lord, after that he had called him.* We may here remember that it was "in the cool of the evening," when the Almighty summoned before Him our guilty first parents; and how He then *called* them, before He reproved. Let us learn hence to be "slow to speak," and "slow to wrath," in this, as in other matters; for, as S. Augustine well observes, "Whatever you say under the influence of excited feelings, is rather the attack of one, who would punish, than the charity of one, who would reclaim." Lev. xix. 17; Prov. xxv. 9-12; Gal. vi. 1.—*J. Ford.*

V. 28.—Why should we so eagerly seek and pursue the empty shadows of worldly power and glory, which, if we catch them, we in effect catch nothing, and, whatever it is, doth presently slip out of our hands? Why do we please ourselves in such evanid dreams? Is it not much better to rest quiet and content in any station, wherein God hath placed us, than to trouble ourselves and others in climbing higher to a precipice, where we can hardly stand upright, and whence we shall certainly tumble into

the grave. iv. 8 ; xviii. 1 ; xxxiii. 6, 7, 12 ; Ps. xlix. 16 ; lxxiii. 17-20.—*Dr. Barrow.*

V. 31.—*They cried the more.* Observe the gradation in those words (vi. 7). *Ask* ; but you must not stay there : *seek* ; nor yet must you rest satisfied there : you must *knock*. Your affections should be every day more earnest ; you should pray more fervently, as it is said of Christ, “He prayed more earnestly.” vii. 7, 8 ; xi. 12 ; S. Luke xxii. 44.—*Chr. Love.*

The stronger the cry, the stronger the child. Acts vii. 60.—*Gurnall.*

V. 32.—Grant a courtesy, if you intend it at all, willingly and speedily ; for that doubles it. To keep long in suspense is churlish ; for by long expectation the passion to the favour dies. S. Mark i. 40, 41 ; S. Luke xviii. 8.—*Palmer.*

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 5.—*He cometh : Unto thee, if thou believest ; against thee, if thou believest not.* S. Luke ii. 11 ; 2 Cor. ii. 6.—*S. Chrysostom.*

We know that it was the custom of their judges and rulers, in earlier and purer times of the Jewish history, to ride on asses in public processions (Judges v. 10 ; x. 4 ; xii. 14). Grotius informs us that this custom fell into disuse at the time of Solomon, when horses were imported into Judea from Egypt (1 Kings x. 28, 29). While, then, our Lord, in thus sitting *upon an ass*, certainly intended to express that “ His Kingdom was not of this world,” is it quite beyond the reach of probability to suppose that He designed also to show the approaching restoration of Israel to primitive simplicity by His Church ; according to the prophecy of Isaiah (i. 26, 27), “ I will restore thy judges, *as at the first*, and thy counsellors *as at the beginning* ; afterwards, thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city ?” Deut. xvii. 16 ; Ps. xx. 7–33 ; Eccl. x. 7 ; Hos. xiv. 3 ; Isa. xxxi. i. And then the preceding verse in the prophet “ I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin” would have its evident fulfilment here in Christ’s visit to the Temple, (v. 12) and in His removal of its defilements.—*J. Ford.*

O glorious King of Heaven and earth, how dost Thou humble Thyself, even in the day of Thy triumph, to ride,

like a poor mean man, on an ass, a beast of the yoke and burden ; and that, too, none of His own ! Blush now, my soul, at thy own pride and be confounded at thy vain curiosity. Thy Lord might have called the Cherubim to bear Him on their wings, and dazzled with their brightness the eyes of the beholders ; but He chose to enter, as the Prince of meekness, and the Saviour of the poor. Hab. iii. 4 ; S. Luke 11, 7 ; 2 Cor. viii. 9.—*Austin.*

V. 9.—The Prophets and the Apostles, those darker and more clear Evangelists, do so unanimously and assiduously celebrate the Messiah, that, when I read and confer them, I fancy myself sometimes to be present at our Saviour's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where both those, that *went before*, and *those that followed after Him sang, Hosanna to the Son of David.* Acts iii. 24 ; viii. 35 ; Rom. i. 1–3 ; Eph. ii. 20.—*R. Boyle.*

How many make a noise with the voice, but are silent in their hearts ; how many say not a word with their lips, but cry inwardly in their desires ! 1 Sam. i. 13–16. *S. Augustine.*

V. 11.—Alas ! how little reliance can be placed upon kind hearts, and even devotional feelings, if there is no religious principle to guide, direct and strengthen them ! xiii. 20, 21 ; xix. 22 ; S. John v. 35 ; Gal. iv. 13–17.—*Dr. Southey.*

V. 13.—*The house of prayer.* Prayer is the principal and most noble part of God's Worship, and is to be preferred before preaching ; nay, indeed, to speak strictly and properly, preaching is no part of Divine Worship : for every proper act of Divine Worship must have God for

its immediate object, and God's Glory for its immediate end. But the immediate object of preaching are men, to whom it is directed ; and the immediate end of it is the instruction of men ; though it is true, in the ultimate end of it, it tends to, and ends in, the Glory of God ; as indeed all religious actions do, and all our other actions of moment should do. But prayer is immediately directed to God Himself, and is an immediate glorification of Him, and a paying of Divine Worship and honour to Him. In a word, by preaching we are taught how to worship God ; but prayer is itself God's Worship. S. Luke xviii. 10 ; Acts vi. 4 ; 1 Tim. ii. 1.—*Bp. Bull.*

V. 15.—“The *Hosannah* of little children is not less pleasing to God, than the *Hallelujah* of men.” I find this aphorism quoted by Bp. Andrewes. There is a just distinction in it ; for, while the young should *pray* for mercy, the elder should *praise* God for mercy already received.—*J. Ford.*

V. 19.—Herein we find proof of the Lord's goodness. When He was minded to show forth an instance of the *Salvation*, procured by His means, He exerted the power of His might on the persons of *men*, by healing their sicknesses, encouraging them to hope for the future, and to look for the healing of the soul ; but now, when He would exhibit a type of *His judgments* on the obstinately rebellious, He represents the future by the destruction of a *tree*. viii. 32 : Ezek. iv. 4–8 ; xii. 1–8.—*S. Hilary.*

V. 22.—*Believing.* Any thing is too much to be expected, while we look at ourselves ; nothing, while we look to God through Christ. The faith therefore of a Christian may overlook all distinctions, and rest its

dependance on Almighty power, on infinite goodness, on immeasurable love. Rom. v. 17-21; Ps. lxxxi. 10; 2 Cor. vi. 12; Phil. iv. 13.—*J. Venn.*

V. 25.—*The baptism of John.* I conceive it was called *John's baptism*, because it began with John; even as the Law of God is called Moses's Law, because Moses was the first mediator of it. Sacraments (in the wide sense of the term) are of three sorts; some, that promised a Messias to come, as Circumcision and the Paschal Lamb; some, that promise the Messias now coming, as the Baptism of John; some, that promise the Messias as come already, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. S. Luke xvi. 16; Acts x. 37.—*Bp. Hacket.*

V. 28.—The force of *to-day* must not be lost sight of, as reminding us of the urgent claims of our duty to God, and of the great danger of delaying *the time* to work and to keep His commandments. Prov. xxvii. 1; S. Luke xix. 42; Heb. iv. 7.—*J. Ford.*

V. 29.—*But afterwards, &c.* Man is so wretched a being, that the very fickleness, with which he abandons his projects is, in a certain sense, his highest virtue; inasmuch as, in so doing, he bears witness to some remains of a noble nature, still existing within him, and making him distaste objects, which are quite unworthy of his esteem and love. Eccl. ii.; and vii. 29.—*Nicole.*

V. 31.—A life of repentance of past sins, inflamed with love towards God, is more pleasing to Him, than a state of innocence, benumbed under a feeling of self-security. xx. 14; Amos vi. 1.—*S. Gregory.*

Repentance never comes too late, if it comes from the heart ; but late repentance is seldom true. xx. 9 ; xxv. 11, 12.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 33.—By the *householder* is meant God, who for His loving kindness and mercy is likened unto a man. The vine is the Jewish people, planted by God in the land of promise. The hedge around them is the Law, separating them from the Gentiles ; or the Divine protection, like a wall of fire around them. The tower is the temple ; the winepress is the altar ; the husbandmen, the teachers of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees. The householder's going into a far country is God's withdrawing Himself, His manifest immediate miraculous Presence, or His long sufferance. For God seems, as it were, to sleep or absent Himself, while He is long suffering, and doth not immediately punish the sins of men. Ps. l. 3 ; Acts xvii. 30.—*Theophylact.*

V. 41.—*He will miserably destroy, &c.* If God really wished to punish us, He would not so many ages back have warned us. He must to a certain extent punish us against His own will, who so long before, points out to us the way, in which we may escape. That person cannot wish to strike you, who cries out, "Beware." xxiv. 42-44 ; Lam. iii. 33 ; Jer. xxxi. 18-21 ; Rev. ii. 5, 16, 21.—*S. Augustine.*

Such is the blindness of self-love. We easily judge aright, while we think the case is another's ; but instantly change our votes, when we see that it concerns ourselves. vii. 3-5, 12 ; Gen. xxviii. 24 ; 2 Sam. xii. 5, 6 ; S. Luke xx. 16.—*Austin.*

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 2.—*The Kingdom of Heaven.* Through the gate of the Church we enter the gate of Paradise. Acts ii. 47.—*S. Augustine.*

God rules in heaven, by His Glory ; on the earth, by His Grace ; and in hell, by His Justice. Ps. cxxxv. 6.

V. 3.—(S. Luke xiv. 18—“*They all with one consent made excuse.*”) *Poor* men think that rich men may well mind religion ; and *rich* men think that poor men had need to do it. *Prosperity* thinks that it hath better things to mind, than a God ; and *adversity* knows that it hath worse things, but it must mind them. *Plenty* is too full to entertain Him ; and *poverty* hath enough to do to bear up under its own burden. *Learning* knows how, but will not ; *ignorance* says it would, but knows not how. Prov. xi. 22 ; S. Matt. vii. 13 ; Heb. iii. 12 ; Rom. x. 21.—*Sam. Shaw.*

V. 4.—By faith we come to the wedding feast ; by charity, which is the life, and by good works, which are the fruit, of faith, we are qualified to eat the flesh of the Lamb and to receive nourishment from it. v. 23, 24 ; S. John vi. 35.—*Quesnel.*

Faith says to me, generally, “Vast and unspeakable Blessings are prepared by God for His faithful servants.” Hope says, “These Blessings are prepared for *me*.” Charity says, “I therefore hasten to receive them.” Ps. xxiii. 1 ; S. John xx. 4 ; Phil ii. 20.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 6.—To the three calls to the feast He places, in contrast, the three kinds of persons, who refused the call, and came not to the nuptial banquet. The first class comprehends the unwilling ; the second, the indifferent ; the third, the opposed.—*Gerhard*.

Thus, in the parable of the sower, there are three kinds of unprofitable soil. xiii. 4-7 ; vii. 14.—*J. Ford*.

V. 8.—At the great Day, one question only will be asked, which will silence every objector ; namely, “Were you not *bidden* ?” There is nothing but unbelief, that shuts a man out of heaven. Our Saviour says not, Ye *could* not, but “Ye *would* not come unto Me, that ye might have life.” S. John iii. 18 ; xv. 32 ; Rom. x. 18 ; S. Luke xiv. 24.—*R. Cecil*.

V. 11.—God, though He be free in His entertainments, yet is curious of His guests. Ps. i. 12.—*Bp. Hall*.

V. 12.—It was the custom at Royal Marriages to provide suitable garments for the guests, invited to the feast ; and in such a dress, furnished by the keeper of the robes, they were naturally expected to make their appearance. This question, therefore, well expresses the great surprise, the just indignation, of the King, at the insult here offered him, and means, as Dr. Donne observes, not only “How *didst* thou, but how *durst* thou come in, not having a wedding garment ?” So shall it be at the last great Day. That clothing of the soul, which must cover the nakedness of our sins and fit us for the Presence of the Most Holy—those garments of Salvation, which are dyed in the Redeemer’s Blood, and made clean and white by His Spirit, are freely provided for us in the

Church, "without money and without price." They may be had on the easy terms of our asking for them (Rom. x. 13): not to ask for them, and then dare to present ourselves before the King of Kings without them, is an act of the most monstrous ingratitude, combined with the most inexcusable folly; it is such an insult, as frustrates all His mercies towards us, and provokes him to "swear in His wrath that we shall not enter into His rest," that we shall not "taste of His supper." Isa. lxi. 10; Rom. xiii. 14; Rev. iii. 5, 18; xix. 7-10.—*J. Ford.*

A wedding garment. Methinks the disputation, whether should have the precedency, faith or good works, whether is the better piece to put into *a garment*, is uncharitable and unnecessary. Why should I question which is the best piece, when the want of either spoils the garment? Where both reflect upon each other by a mutual dependence, what talk we then of priority? Heat furthers motion, and motion increases heat. Faith begins good works; and good works elevate, and quicken, and exalt our faith. Faith is the mother of good works; and good works the nurse of faith. Can you separate light from a burning taper, or brightness from the flame? Then may you divide Faith and Charity. xix. 6; Gal. v. 6; James ii. 14, 26; 1 John iii. 23.—*Farindon.*

He would rather endure the pain of hell, than stand up before a God armed against him. Mal. ii. 2, 5.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 13.—Consider the binding of the *hands* and *feet*, the weeping of the *eyes*, and the gnashing of the *teeth*, as setting forth the truth of the Resurrection of the *body*. —*S. Jerome.*

V. 14.—*Few are chosen.* If my religion is only a formal compliance with those modes of worship, that are in fashion, where I live ; if it costs me no pains and trouble ; if it lays me under no rules and restraints ; if I have no careful thoughts and sober reflections about it, is it not a great weakness to think that I am “striving to enter in at the strait gate?” (vii. 13, 14.) If there is nothing different in my life and conversation, that shows me to be different from a Jew, or a heathen ; if I use the world and worldly amusements, as the generality of people now do, and in all ages have done ; why should I think I am among those few, who walk in the “narrow way” to heaven ? v. 46, 47 ; Titus ii. 14 ; Rom. xii. 1–4. —*Wm. Law.*

V. 16.—*Master, &c.* The enemy of our happiness is busy around us everywhere, laying his snares, with a “Well done ! Well done !” in order that, while we greedily pick up the seed, he may catch us by surprise. The devil has his gentle spirits, to employ in his service. Rom. xvi. 17, 18 ; Ps. xxviii. 3 ; lv. 22 ; Prov. xxvii. 21. —*S. Augustine.*

V. 20.—The Magistrate is sealed, and that with the very finger of God. The King’s broad seal—what is it ? The matter is wax ; but, having *the image and superscription* of my Prince, it is either my pardon, or my liberty, or my charter, or my possessions. Prov. viii. 15, 16 ; Rom. xiii. 1.—*Farindon.*

In like manner, as Cæsar demands of us the stamp of his likeness, so does God also ; and, as we render money to the one, so we give our souls to the other—our souls

enlightened and sealed with the light of His countenance. Rom. viii. 29 ; 2 Cor. iii. 18.—*Bede*.

God, for the better settling of piety and honesty among men, and the repressing of profaneness and other vices, hath established two distinct powers upon earth ; the one, of the *Keys*, committed to the Church ; the other, of the *Sword*, committed to the Civil Magistrate. That of the *Keys* is ordained to work upon the inner man, having immediate relation to the remitting or retaining of sins ; that of the *Sword* is appointed to work upon the outward man, yielding protection to the obedient, and inflicting external punishment upon the rebellious and disobedient. By the former, the spiritual officers of the Church of Christ are enabled to “ govern well,” “ to speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority,” to loose such as are penitent, to commit others into the Lord’s prison, until their amendment ; or to bind them over to the great Day, if they persist in wilfulness and obstinacy. By the other (the *Sword*), Princes have an imperious power assigned by God to them, for the defence of such as do well, whether by death, or banishment, or confiscation of goods, or imprisonment. xvi. 19 ; Rom. xiii. 4 ; 1 S. Peter ii. 13–18.—*Abp. Usher*.

V. 23.—We live in an age, when men are fond of learning, almost to the loss of Religion. Nothing will pass with our men of wit and sense, but what is agreeable with the nicest reason ; and every man’s reason is his own understanding. These mighty pretenders have no truer ground to go upon, than other men. They plead for right reason ; but they mean their own reason. In the meantime, they take from us our surest guide ; and

Religion suffers by their contentions about it. Ps. xii. 4 ; Dan. xii. 4 ; Isa. xxix. 21 ; Acts xviii. 15, 16 ; 2 Tim. ii. 23.—*Baker.*

V. 25.—*Now there were seven brethren.* This far-fetched hypothetical case put by the Sadducees, which, at first view, seems so improbable, may have been suggested by the history of Sara, the daughter of Raguel (Tobit iii). If so, then we have another instance of the abuse of Sacred words, their perversion to the worst of purposes ; for we may suppose the Sadducees, as hereby endeavouring to procure some credit to their crafty supposition, when they clothed it, if not in express Canonical Scripture, yet in Sacred garb. iv. 6 ; S. John viii. 4, 5 ; 1 S. John iv. 1.—*J. Ford.*

I am persuaded, that some men take more pains to furnish themselves with arguments to defend some one *error*, they have taken up, than they do for the most saying *Truths* in the Bible ; yea, they could sooner die at the stake to defend one error they hold, than all the Truths they profess. S. Augustine said of himself, when he was a Manichean, " Not Thou, Lord, but my own error was my God ! " Jer. vii. 4 ; Acts xix. 28, 34.—*Gurnall.*

V. 27.—*Died also.* It is reported of one, that hearing the fifth chapter of Genesis read ; so long lives, and yet the burden still, *they Died*—Seth lived 912 years, *and he died* ; Methuselah 969 years, *and he died*—he took so deeply the thought of death and eternity, that it changed his whole frame, and turned him from a voluptuous to a most strict and pious course of life. How small a word will do much, when God sets it to the heart !—*Abp. Leighton.*

I had lately some views of death, and it appeared to me in the most brilliant colours. What is to die, but to open our eyes after the disagreeable dream of this life, after the black sleep, in which we are buried on this earth? It is to break the prison of corruptible flesh and blood, into which sin hath cast us; to draw aside the curtain, to cast off the material veil, which prevents us from seeing Supreme Beauty and Goodness, "face to face." It is to quit our polluted and tattered raiment, to be invested with robes of honour and glory, and to behold the Sun of Righteousness in brightness without an interposing cloud. Oh, my dear friend, how lovely is Death, when we look at it in Jesus Christ! To die is one of the greatest privileges of the Christian. Gen. xlix. 18; Phil. i. 23; Rev. xxii. 20.—*J. W. Fletcher.*

V. 29.—*Ye know not the Scriptures.* Heresy arises from a false interpretation, and not from the Scripture itself. It is not the Word of God, which is to blame, but our wrong construction. S. Luke xxiv. 27-45; 1 Cor. xv. 12; 1 Tim. i. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 18.—*S. Hilary.*

I would sooner know a little less of the Scriptures, than know them in a wrong sense. Prov. xv. 16.—*Tertullian.*

Our Lord here teaches us a very important truth, which is this; that the knowledge of the Scriptures is only to be found in their true interpretation. To fail in ascertaining their proper meaning is to be ignorant of them, and to remain in darkness. "It is the spirit that quickeneth;" the letter only may help to blind and to destroy. This conviction, if duly weighed, would make us more careful in speaking of the diffusion around us of

Biblical knowledge, and, especially, more humble, in regard to our own progress in the study of the Word of life. Job. xxviii. 28 ; Ps. cxix. 33-40 ; S. John xx. 9 ; 1 Cor. viii. 2 ; Acts viii. 27-35.—*J. Ford.*

V. 30.—*Are as the Angels, &c.* O blessed answer ! Thou hast opened the door of heaven and given us a glimpse of that glorious state. Thou hast taught us more in one short word, than all the learning of the world could reach. We shall hereafter be as *Angels* ; perfectly know, and fervently love and possess the object of that knowledge and love for ever. Here, while immersed in flesh, our thoughts are low, and our discourse dull, and our joys restrained to a few and petty instances. Our comfort is, that in a little while we shall think, and discourse, and love, *as the Angels in Heaven !* Isa. xxv. 6-10 ; xxxv. 10.—*Austin.*

V. 32.—If it be asked, why God is named three times here, the *God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, we may piously answer, it is partly to intimate the great mystery of the Trinity, in whose Triune Name our holy Covenant of grace and mercy is made, ratified, and confirmed ; partly to denote the special Providence of God, so signally auspicious towards each of these Patriarchs in their respective times ; as also to point out the distinguishing example of every one of them for some singular grace and virtue—*Abraham*, as eminent for his faith and obedience ; *Isaac*, for purity of mind and innocence ; and *Jacob*, for patience and constancy : and if in these graces we imitate them, we shall have their God for our God. xxviii. 19.—*Wogan.*

V. 34.—*When they heard, &c.* A strange thing ; for what was that, which they heard ! Was it not the making good *their* tenet against the Sadducees ? the proving of the *Resurrection of the dead* ? A man would expect that they would congratulate Christ's victory and rejoice in the refutation of the Sadducees (Acts iv. 2). Haply, they would have done so, if there had been nothing else ; but Christ got credit by the Sadducees' silence ; the people wondered at it (v. 33) : this was a corrosive to the Pharisees. They were jealous that, what Christ gained, they lost. Therefore they maligned His success ; and malice hath not eyes to see good turns or be moved by them. Nay, see ; Christ was taking their part against the Sadducees, and they revenge the Sadducees' quarrel upon Christ. Malice doth not only not see good turns ; but it can forget also ill turns to do a mischief unto those that are good. Prov. xxvii. 4 ; Acts xxiii. 6—9.—*Bp. Lake.*

Put to silence. The Greek word here is remarkable. He *bridled* their mouths, indicating His complete mastery over them. He muzzled them, so that "from that day forth no one durst ask Him any more questions" (v. 46). The same expressive term is used to describe His silencing the unclean spirit (S. Mark i. 25 ; S. Luke iv. 35,) and stilling that tempest, which very probably was raised by the power of the evil one. Ps. viii. 6 ; xxxix. 2 ; S. Mark iv. 39.—*J. Ford.*

V. 37.—When he says, *With all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind*, He leaves no part of our life disengaged, so as to admit the enjoyment of ought else ; but whatever incentive to our love may arise, let it

be carried quick into that channel, where the main torrent of all our affection is borne along. Pa. lxxiii. 24 ; 2 Cor. v. 14.—*S. Augustine.*

An earnest wish for the love of others arises from the great love, which we bear towards them. 1 John iv. 19.—*S. Chrysostom.*

The great Commandment. I fear that many of us little think, how *great* it is. We little reflect, on the one hand, how *great* our obligation is to love our God ; and, on the other side, how great the advantages are, which cannot fail to attend this love. We little consider how *great* our ingratitude is, if we omit our greatest duty ; how *great* our folly is, if we omit our greatest good. Deut x. 12, 13 ; Rom. xiii. 10 ; S. John v. 42.—*A Contrite heart.*

V. 39.—Holy Scripture forbids but one thing, which is *covetousness*, and the love of the creature ; and it commands but one thing, which is *charity*, and the love of God. Upon this double rule is established all Christian morality.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 44.—The 110th Psalm is one of the clearest and most compendious prophecies of the Person and offices of Christ in the whole Old Testament, and so full of fundamental truths, that I shall not scruple to call it “ the prophet David’s Creed.” And indeed there are very few, if any, of the Articles of that Creed, which we all generally profess, which are not either plainly expressed, or by most evident implication couched, in this little model. Acts ii. 29–37 ; xiii. 32–37.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 45.—The untying of this knot dependeth upon the right understanding of the wonderful conjunction of the

Divine and Human nature in the Unity of the Person of our Redeemer. For, by reason of the strictness of this Personal Union, whatsoever may be verified of either of the natures, the same may be truly spoken of the whole Person ; from whether-soever of the natures it is denominated. S. John iii. 13 ; Acts iii. 15 ; **xx.** 28 ; Col. ii. 9 ; Rev. **xxii.** 16.—*Abp. Usher.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

V. 3.—*Observe and do.* This injunction is qualified by our Lord's warning (xvi. 12), where He tells His disciples to "*beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees.*" Their doctrine, then, was to be observed and followed, only so long as they adhered to the established Jewish Creed, to "*the Law and the testimony.*" Isa. viii. 20 ; Prov. xix. 27 ; 1 Thess. v. 20, 21.—*J. Ford.*

Christians should entertain such a hatred of schism, as always to shun it, where they can do so. And such should be our reverence for the Sacred Ministry and Sacraments, that wherever we find these to exist, there we recognize the Church. Whatever then be the character of those, by whom the Lord permits a Church to be administered, it were better not to decline communion with it, if we only find there the marks of the Church. Nor does it alter the case, should some false doctrine be taught therein ; for there is scarcely a Church, which does not retain some vestiges of ignorance. It is quite enough for us, if the Doctrine, on which Christ established His Church, be found there, and be maintained. ii. 4 ; viii. 4 ; Deut. xvii. 8-13 ; Numb. xvi. ; Heb. xiii. 7.—*Calvin.*

V. 5.—*Satan is transformed into an Angel of light,* saith the Apostle ; not he *was*, but he *is* : so transformed, that he never did, never will, put off the counterfeit ; and, as all his imps are partakers of the Satanical nature, so in

every hypocrite there is both the Angel, and the devil : the seeming Angel is the *form of godliness* ; the real devil is the denial of the *power of godliness*. xxv. 41 ; S. John viii. 44 ; 1 Tim. iv. 2.—*Bp. Hall*.

V. 7.—Christ is not in the *markets*, nor in the streets ; for Christ is Peace ; in the markets are strifes. Christ is Justice ; in the market is iniquity. Christ is a labourer ; in the market is idleness. Christ is Charity ; in the market is slander. Christ is Faith ; in the market is fraud. Let us not therefore seek Christ, where we cannot find Christ. xii. 19 ; xx. 3 ; S. Mark xiv. 49 ; S. Luke ii. 45, 46 ; S. John xiv. 3.—*S. Ambrose*.

V. 8.—When Almighty God places over us any teacher, He appoints him, not as an individual, but an officer and delegate in His Church ; and only as an officer of the Church does he possess an external authority over us. Almighty God commands us to have faith ; but it is faith in Himself and in His Church, not in any *father on earth*. He commands us to love and honour our teachers, *in the Lord* ; but to honour and love them as men, who bear a light from heaven in a vessel of clay. 1 Cor. iv. 7 ; 2 Cor. ii. 10 ; iv. 7 ; 1 Thess. v. 13.—*W. Sewell*.

V. 9.—*One is your Father*. None is so much a Father, none so tenderly affected towards you. He zealously asserts the name of a *Father*, rather than of a Lord and Master. S. Matt. vi. 48 ; Rom. viii. 15 ; 1 Pet. i. 17.—*Tertullian*.

V. 13.—*Ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven, &c.* Intellectual attainments and habits are no security for good conduct ; unless they are supported by religious

principles. Without religion the highest endowments of intellect can only render the possessor more dangerous, if he be ill disposed ; if well disposed, only more unhappy. Gen. iii. 1 ; Ps. cxi. 10.—*Dr. Southey.*

V. 14.—*Widows' houses.* When theft, or oppression, or perjury, or sacrilege, have laid the foundation and reared the house, then the curse of God creepeth in between the walls and ceilings, and lurketh close between the stones and timber ; and as a fretting moth or canker, insensibly gnaweth asunder the pins and joints of the building, till it have unframed it and resolved it into a ruinous heap ; from which mischief there is no remedy no preservation from it but one, and that is free and speedy *restitution*. Isa. i. 17, 23 ; Micah vi. 10 ; Hab. ii. 5–14 ; Luke xix. 8.—*Bp. Sanderson.*

There is no grace, that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success, than a religious zeal. 2 Kings x. 16 ; Acts xix. 27, 28, 34 ; 2 Cor. xi. 13.—*Cowper.*

V. 16.—Men expose themselves to this danger of swearing to no purpose. For common swearing, if it have any serious meaning at all, argues in a man a perpetual distrust of his own reputation ; and is an acknowledgment that he thinks his bare word not to be worthy of credit. xxvi. 74.—*Abp. Tillotson.*

V. 17.—*Ye fools and blind.* Mildness does but sooth a hypocrite in his error (verse 33). Acts viii. 20–24 ; xiii. 10.—*Dr. Manton.*

The world hates hypocrites, because they seem good ; God hates them, because they only seem good. 1 Sam. xvi. 7.—*F. Quarles.*

V. 23.—The habit of attending to trifles and occupying and distracting the mind about them is even far more pernicious and dangerous, than that of attaching oneself to some matter of consequence : first, because it renders the soul, if we may say so, more contracted, and little, and less capable of raising itself to God : secondly, because trifles are so numerous on every side ; and hence the soul has no sooner got free from one, than it is again entangled with another. vi. 31 ; S. Luke x. 41, 42 ; 1 Cor. vii. 33. (S. Mark vii. 4, 8, 13. *many*.)—*B. Overberg.*

Look well, my soul, into thy own breast, and see how much of the Pharisee thou findest there. Why dost thou value thy fair appearances in the eyes of others before the real substance of virtue in thyself ? Why art thou more affected at some petty observances, than the fundamental laws of justice and charity ; or thinkest to atone to God for greater indulgences by a scrupulous strictness in easy duties ? Remember thy Lord's severe reproofs, and faithfully examine thy own conscience. Dost thou not know that great things we ought to *do*, and not leave the other *undone* ? 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23 ; Ps. l. 7, 8, 14, 15.—*Austin.*

Gnat-strainers are often camel-swallowers ; and the Pharisaical mantle of superstitious austerity is very frequently a cover for a cloven foot. Col. ii. 20-23 ; 1 Tim. iv. 1-5.—*Toplady.*

V. 26.—Bended knees, whilst you are clothed with pride ; Heavenly petitions, whilst you are hoarding up treasures upon earth ; Holy devotions, whilst you live in the follies of the world ; prayers of meekness and charity,

while your heart is the seat of spite and resentment ; hours of prayer, while you give up days and years to idle diversions, impertinent visits, and foolish pleasures—these are as absurd and unacceptable a service to God, as forms of thanksgiving from a person, who lives in repinings and in discontent. Prov. xv. 8 ; S. Jas. iv. 8.—*Wm. Law.*

V. 27.—Some persons, instead of “ putting off the old man,” dress him up in a new shape. Hos. vii. 8 ; 2 Cor. v. 17.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 29.—It is the living Christian, and lively worship, and serious spiritual religion, that they hate : kill it, and they can bear it. Let living Christians be once dead, and dead-hearted hypocrites themselves will honour them, especially at sufficient distance. They will destroy the living Saints, and keep Holy Days for the dead ones. xiv. 1-5.—*Baxter.*

V. 30.—*If we had been, &c.* Do not please yourself with thinking, how piously you would act and submit to God in a plague, a famine, a persecution ; but be intent upon the perfection of the present day ; and be assured that the best way of shewing a true zeal is to make little things the occasion of great piety. Eccl. ix. 10 ; S. Mark vii. 37 ; S. Luke xix. 17.—*Wm. Law.*

V. 32.—We have in the Sacred writers several instances of strong style, sharpened with a just severity against bold blasphemers and enemies to our Saviour’s cross. Whence we learn that ’tis a vain pretence that only gentle and soft expressions are to be applied to people, that renounce good principles and corrupt the Gospel. . . . Some persons are of a slavish temper, and are not to be

reclaimed or worked upon without a charitable eagerness and vehemence. Some are so stupid and secure, as not to be convinced or awakened without exposing and inveighing against their guilt, and expressing their danger in all the terrors and loudest thunders of eloquence. iii. 7 ; 2 Tim. iv. 3 ; Titus i. 13 ; Acts xiii. 10.—*A. Blackwall.*

Let us not be so reluctant to hear Hell spoken of ; for so, by hearing, we shall escape it. Isa. xxx. 8–13 ; Ezek. xviii. 31, 32.—*S. Gregory.*

V. 37.—*How often would I, &c.* Amongst all other prejudices and misconceits, that our fancy can entertain of God, I conceive not any so frequent, or injurious to His attributes, as to imagine Him to deal double with mankind in His Word ; seriously to will one thing, and to make show of another ; to deliver Himself in one phrase, and to reserve Himself in another. Isa. xlviii. 17–19 ; Numb. xxiii. 19, 20 ; Ezek. xviii. 23 ; S. John xiv. 2 ; 1 Tim. ii. 4 ; 2 S. Pet. iii. 9.—*Dr. Hammond.*

Under the old Dispensation, Jehovah was unto His people, as an *eagle* (Deut. xxii. 11). In the Gospel, He seems to come down and draw near to us, even about our path and our dwellings, under the more familiar and domestic similitude of a *hen*. Of this bird, S. Augustine reports ; “ No bird shows such a truly maternal disposition, as does the hen ; no bird sympathises with its offspring, as we see in her drooping wings, her feathers standing on end, and her shrill voice : so Christ is made weak for us.” xxvi. 38 ; Isa. lxiii. 9 ; Heb. iv. 15.—*J. Ford.*

V. 30.—If the Jews yet live, and are known, all the great wonders of old live in them ; and then who can

deny the stretched-out arm of a mighty God? Especially, since it may be a just doubt, whether, considering the stubbornness of the nation, their living then in this country under so many miracles, were a stranger thing, than this present exile, and disability to live in their country. And it is observable, that this very thing was intended by God that the Jews should be His proof and "witnesses," as He calls them (Isa. xliii. 12), and their dispersion into all lands was intended, not only for a punishment to them, but for an exciting of others by their sight to an acknowledgment of God and His power (Ps. lix. 11). "Slay them not, &c.;" and, therefore, this kind of punishment was chosen, rather than any other. Exod. ix. 16.—*G. Herbert.*

V. 39.—Think not that you shall turn to God, when you *will*, if you will not, when you *may*. Isa. lxxv. 6, 7; Acts xxiv. 25.—*Bp. Babington.*

Blessed is He, &c. The song of their recovery. At this verse our Lord's public discourse with the Jews terminates: from this verse their repentance will take its beginning. Deut. xxx. 1–5; Rom. xi. 26.—*Bengel.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 1.—We admire commonly those things, that are oldest and greatest. Old monuments and high buildings do affect us beyond measure. And what is the reason? Because what is oldest cometh nearest to God for antiquity; and what is greatest cometh nearest His works in spaciousness and magnitude. Ps. xc. 1, 2; 2 Chron. vi. 18.—*Bp. Corbet.*

V. 2.—*Verily I say unto you.* If you would act your faith aright, whatsoever God hath said in His holy Word, you must not doubt in the least of it; but be fully persuaded in your minds, that it is as infallibly true and certain, as you are, or can be, of any thing you see, or hear, or understand; and more so, too; inasmuch as you have the Word of God for that, which is infinitely more than you have for anything, that you perceive only by your senses or reason. 2 S. Pet. i. 19; Heb. xi. 1; 1 S. John v. 20.—*Bp. Beveridge.*

V. 3.—*Upon the Mount of Olives.* From which quarter there was a view of the Temple, and where the future siege of the city would begin. S. Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Zech. xiv. 4.—*Bengel.*

They thought the Temple should stand as long as the world stood; therefore, as soon as Christ said the Temple should be destroyed, they presently thought with themselves of the end of the world. Acts vi. 13, 14.—*Eduw. Leigh.*

V. 6.—*See that ye be not troubled.* We must believe that God's Providence over states and kingdoms, times and seasons, is all for the best ; that the revolutions of states and changes of empire, the rise and fall of monarchies, persecution, wars, famines, and plagues are all permitted and conducted by God's Providence to the general good of mankind in this state of trial. This is a noble magnificence of thought, a true religious greatness of mind, to be thus affected with God's general Providence, admiring and magnifying His wisdom in all things ; never murmuring at the course of the world, or the state of things ; but looking upon all around, at heaven and earth, as a pleased spectator, and adoring that invisible Hand, which gives laws to all motions, and overrules all events, to ends suitable to the highest wisdom and goodness. *Exod. ix. 16 ; 2 Kings xix. 25–32 ; Dan. ii. 19–24 ; vi. 25–28 ; Rom. xi. 33–36.—Wm. Law.*

V. 10.—*Many shall be offended.* From the beginning of fears Christ dates the beginning of apostacy. When troubles and dangers come to a height, then fears begin to work at a height too ; and then is the critical hour. Fears are high, and faith is low ; temptations strong, and resistance weak. Satan knocks at the door ; then fear opens it, and yields up the soul to him. *x. 28 ; xxvi. 74 ; Rev. xxi. 8.—Flavel.*

V. 12.—It is hardly possible to explain this chapter consistently, without regarding it, as a general description of the “latter times,” or days of the Messiah ; that is, of the whole period of time from the first promulgation of Christianity to the end of the world. The destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, the first great event

of the new Dispensation, is brought prominently forward to be, as it were, a voucher for the correctness of the whole representation to such, as lived in those times. And therefore it is given with more of detail, than any other part of the prophecy. . . . The Apostles seem to have imagined, not unnaturally, that, when once the Jewish city and temple were destroyed, the old things passed away, and the days of the Messiah begun, all would be peace, righteousness and mercy; and the sins and miseries of mankind would cease for ever. Jesus Christ, therefore, is careful to explain to them on this, as on many other occasions, that, although they judged quite rightly of the natural and essential tendencies of the Gospel, they are greatly mistaken, as to its real results in this world. x. 34; Jer. xv. 10.—*Keble*.

V. 14. —*The Gospel, preached* throughout the whole world, is the sign of the Lord's coming; so that none may have an excuse. xxviii. 19, 20; Rev. xiv. 6–20.—*S. Jerome*.

For a witness unto them—for an evidence of their duty and an admonition to perform it. . . . The visible constitution and course of nature, the moral law written in our hearts, the positive institutions of Religion, and even any memorial of it, are all spoken of in Scripture under this or the like denomination; so are the Prophets, the Apostles, and our Lord Himself. They are all *witnesses*, for the most part unregarded witnesses, in behalf of God to mankind. They inform us of His Being and Providence, and of the particular dispensation of religion we are under, and continually remind us of them.

And they are equally witnesses of these things, whether we regard them, or not. v. 14; Ezek. ii. 5, 6; S. Luke xii.; Heb. ii. 3, 4; Acts v. 32.—*Bp. Butler.*

V. 16.—God never denounceth judgments against the wicked, but He maketh some proviso for His children, as it were for some certain privileged persons. Ps. cv. 15; Rev. vii. 1-3; 2 Thes. ii. 11-14.—*Hooker.*

V. 17.—It is, I think, a mark of right understanding in the language of prophecy, and in the design of prophecy too, to keep to what appears the design and the meaning of the prophecy in general, and to what the whole of it, when laid together, points out to us; and not to suffer a warm imagination to mislead us from the real intention of the spirit of prophecy, by following uncertain applications of the parts of it. 2 S. Pet. i. 20, 21.—*Lowman.*

V. 20.—Happy is the man, that is not found, when he leaves this world, leading a fruitless, nor yet an idle life. The *winter* is the barren time of the year, and the *Sabbath* was a time, not of labour, but of rest. Eccl. iii. 1-11.—*Theophylact.*

V. 21.—Living in an age of extraordinary events and revolutions, I have learnt from thence the truth, which I desire might thus be communicated to posterity; that all is vanity, which is not honest; and that there is no solid wisdom, but in real piety. Job xxviii. 28; Eccl. xii. 13, 14.—*John Evelyn* (His Epitaph, by himself).

V. 23.—*Lo ! here is Christ, or there.* In this He shews that His second coming shall not be in lowliness, like the first, but in Glory; and therefore it is folly to

seek in places little and obscure for Him, who is "the Light of the whole world." Verse 27 ; Acts i. 11.—*S. Jerome.*

Believe it not. As in the world of nature, shadows are coupled with light, as in the Church the evil is mingled with the good, as in the daily walks of life falsehood sits side by side with truth, hypocrisy with sincerity, wisdom with the pretence of wisdom, while in discerning them is our chief trial, so it is in the world of our own hearts. There is a true conscience and a false ; one, which speaks to us from heaven, and many, which speak like, yet take their rise from a very different source. Ps. v. 8 ; Acts xxvi. 9 ; Gal. v. 8.—*W. Sewell.*

V. 25.—*Behold, I have told you before.* God has made a double provision for the moral growth of man. First, He has given us instructions in our duty in the Bible ; and, secondly, He has given us opportunities to practise it in the duties and difficulties of life. The Bible is full and complete, as a Book of direction ; human life is full and complete, as a field of exercise. Isa. xxx. 20, 21 ; 1 Tim. iii. 16, 17.—*Abbott.*

I may describe the conditions, which would confer this cogency of evidence on single examples of prophecy, in the following manner. First, the known promulgation of the prophecy, prior to the event. Secondly, the clear and palpable fulfilment of it. Lastly, the nature of the event itself ; if when the prediction of it was given, it lay remote from human view, and was such as could not be foreseen by any supposable effort of reason, or be deduced upon principles of calculation, derived from probability or experience. 2 S. Pet. i. 19–21.—*Davison.*

V. 26.—Nothing doth so much drive men out of the Church, as breach of Unity ; and therefore, whensoever it cometh to pass that one saith, *He is in the desert*, and another saith, *He is in the secret chambers* ; that is, when some men seek Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in the outward face of a Church, that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, "*Go not out.*" Acts xx. 30.—*Lord Bacon.*

V. 29.—*Immediately after the tribulation.* At this verse, we find the clasp, which unites the two parts of this comprehensive prophecy ; (the first part, relating to the destruction of Jerusalem ; the latter, to the end, when "*all the tribes of the earth shall mourn*") ; both thus corresponding with the two distinct questions, proposed by the Apostles to our Lord. The *tribulation*, consequent upon the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, has not yet ceased. It will cease, when "*the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled,*" and then will be the Lord's Second Advent ; then will be *the end of the world*. S. Mark and S. Luke clearly notice the same distinction in this wonderful prophecy. S. Mark xiii. 24 ; S. Luke xxi. 24 ; Rom. xi. 25.—*J. Ford.*

V. 30.—*All the tribes of the earth.* All those, whose hearts are always fixed upon *the earth*, upon the honours and riches, and pleasures of *the earth*, they shall all *mourn*. And not without sufficient reason ; for, first, they shall see the fatal end of all their transitory happiness (Rev. xii. 12) ; and, secondly, they shall see the sad beginning of all their everlasting misery.—*A Contrite heart.*

V. 31.—We must look unto heaven, to the very throne, the Royal throne ; for there sits the "*first fruit*" of

mankind. He will certainly come again, leading all His hosts along with Him, the legions of Angels, the several squadrons of Archangels, the societies of the Martyrs, the quires of the righteous, the tribes of the Prophets and Apostles ; and in the midst of these immaterial camps the King Himself will appear in a certain unutterable and inexpressible Glory. xxv. 31 ; 2 Thess. i. 8 ; 2 S. Pet. iii. 12.—*S. Chrysostom.*

O dark house, or cave of earth ! how willingly would I leave thee, if I might be transported, to meet our Blessed Lord, thus Royally encamped in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17, 18) O poor world ! How come I so far to value thee, as to suffer thee to captivate this heart ? How glad should I be rather to see thee no more, if I might but behold Him⁷ appear, whom my soul loveth ? Nay, it ought not to grieve me to see this earth and all things in it in a flame, if that Celestial Glory would but show itself. Arise, shine forth, O thou Sun of Righteousness, and make us Blessed with a sight of Thy Glory ! vi. 10, 19, 20 ; 2 Tim. iv. 8 ; 2 Cor. v. 1-3 ; Rev. xxii. 20.—*Bp. Patrick.*

V. 36.—Though, as God, He could not be ignorant of any thing, yet His human understanding did not *know* it. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the Divine wisdom, which dwelt in our Saviour, did communicate itself to His human soul, according to His pleasure ; and so His human nature might at some times not know some things. And, if this be not admitted, how can we understand that passage concerning our Saviour (S. Luke ii. 52) that “ Jesus grew in wisdom and stature,”—“ or, as the Greek word may more fitly be translated, in age and in favour ”—“ with God and man ? ”

For, if the human nature of Christ did necessarily know all things by virtue of its union with the Divinity, He could not then, as man, be said to *grow in wisdom*. S. John xv. 15 ; xvii. 8.—*Abp. Tillotson*.

Our Saviour here sufficiently intimates the *Angels* of heaven to be endued with excellent knowledge superior to that of men ; and that perhaps may be one reason why the Scripture styles them “Angels of Light.” 2 Sam. xiv. 20 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 1.—*R. Boyle*.

V. 39.—As those vapours, which rise from the earth, overspread the heavens, and intercept the light of the sun, so do gluttony and drunkenness excite in men such fumes of darkness, as obscure the brightness of human reason, and overcast the Light of the Divine Spirit within us. vi. 22 ; Eph. iv. 18, 19.—*S. Basil*.

V. 41.—The *two in a bed* (S. Luke xvii. 34) may represent those, who removed from the busy stir of life seem to spend their days at ease in idleness ; the *two at the mill* may be they, who are carried round and round with the affairs of this world ; the *two in the field*, persons engaged in the Ministry of the Church, some of whom are faithful, and others unfaithful in times of adversity.—*Isidore of Seville*.

V. 42.—*Watch therefore*. Consider, not only *what* He threateneth, but consider withal *why* He threateneth. It is, that you may repent ; and withal *how* He threateneth ; it is *unless* you repent (Rev. ii. 5 ; Ps. vii. 12, 13). He threateneth to cast down, indeed ; but into humiliation, not into despair. “He shooteth out His arrows, even

bitter words ;" but, as Jonathan's arrows, for warning, not for destruction. 1 Sam. xx. 21 ; Micah vi. 9.—*Bp. Sanderson.*

Thine *audit* at the last Day, is both sure, and uncertain ; sure, that it will come ; uncertain, when it will come.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 44.—If thou expect death, as a friend (S. John xix. 41), prepare to entertain him ; if, as an enemy, prepare to overcome him (1 Cor. xv. 26, 55–58) : death hath no advantage over us, but when he comes, as a stranger. S. Luke xii. 20.—*F. Quarles.*

Whomsoever the last day of his own life finds unprepared, this last Day will find unprepared also. Eccl. xi. 3 ; ix. 10.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 46.—Why do we trouble ourselves with things afar off, that concern not our case ? Why puzzle we our thoughts with mere curiosities, that no ways conduce to our improvement ? Go not after these, my soul, but look to thyself and thy duty. Have we not business enough to provide for the coming of our Lord, but we must lose our time in enquiring when He will come ? Have we not certainty enough in the solid arguments of faith ? But we long to hearken after new Revelations. Go not after these, my soul, but look to thyself and thy duty. Eccl. xi. 4 ; xii. 13, 14 ; Acts i. 11 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58.—*Austin.*

V. 48.—*If that evil servant shall say, &c.* There is nothing between us and heaven, or hell, but life, of all things the most fragile and uncertain. All this is as real, as it is terrible : brave it, as we will, this, and this only, is the end of life. Eternity is not annihilated, because we

turn away our thoughts from it. It subsists, it advances, and death will give a dreadful solution to every doubt of its reality. Heb. ix. 27 ; Isa. xlvii. 7-15 ; and xxviii. 14, 15, 18.—*Pascal.*

It is foolish and even dangerous to indulge in curious and unfruitful speculations, respecting the exact time and circumstances of our Lord's second Advent (v. 3) ; but it is worse than foolish, it is decidedly ruinous to the soul to act under the supposition of the Lord's *delaying His coming* ; as if He would never come at all ; to act, as if there were no Judge, and no awful consequences of Judgment. How finely is such infidelity treated at 2 Pet. iii. 1-5 ; Rom. ii. 1-10.—*J. Ford.*

V. 49.—*Drink with the drunken.* What shall hinder man or woman, under the influence of so powerful an opiate to their understanding, as strong drink, from proceeding to any crime ? Nothing on their own part ; for they have drunk themselves into the condition to be their own tempters ; shame, fear, prudence, and reason being all laid asleep. Prov. xxiii. 29-35 ; Rom. xiii. 11-14.—*Bp. Chandler.*

Drunkenness is a flattering devil, a sweet poison, a pleasant sin ; whosoever hath it, hath not himself. (Luke xv. 17). Whosoever commits it, commits not sin ; but he is himself altogether sin.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 51.—*Hypocrites* are as the freeholders of hell ; other sinners are but as inmates, and have but a portion of their misery. xxiii. 29, 33.—*Caryl.*

Hell is Truth seen too late. Wisd. v. 1-17 ; Luke xvi. 27, 28.—*Adam.*

Most true was that, which Luther spake on this point, "If a man could perfectly see his own evils, the sight thereof would be a perfect hell to him;" and to this God will bring wicked men. "Reprove them, and set their sins in order before them." (Psa. l. 21). Make them take a view of their own hearts and lives, fuller of sins, than the firmament is of stars; or a furnace, of sparks. Ps. xc. 8.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

CHAPTER XXV.

V. 1.—The Parable of the *virgins* teaches us, in a more especial manner, the primary necessity of our having the Grace of God in our hearts, without which we can do nothing. That of the *labourers* leads us to the practical improvement of the same Grace, with which we must co-operate in our lives. Lastly, the account of the proceedings of the great Judgment Day shows us one particular method of this improvement and co-operation ; namely, by such *works of mercifulness*, as are most pleasing to God, the surest evidences of our faith and love, and our best preparatives for His Heavenly Kingdom. It is to be well observed, that all the accounts, which our Blessed Lord has given us of the awful decisions of this last great assize, relate exclusively to the professing Christian Church ; that is, they relate to ourselves. So little ground is there for that pride and uncharitableness in man, which has presumed to pass its final sentence of condemnation on those, upon whom the light of the Gospel has never shined. vii. 21-23 ; xii. 41, 42 ; xiii. 17 ; S. Luke xiii. 3, 5, 23, 24 ; S. John xxi. 22 ; 1 Cor. v. 12 ; Rev. xxii. 13.—*J. Ford.*

V 5.—The five foolish and the five wise virgins all alike *slept* ; that is, they all died : for death is called in Scripture a sleep, as a vigil, in reference to the Resurrection. 1 Thess. iv. 14 ; S. John xi. 12.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 6.—Take heed, life be not done, before we think of living, or, dying, as we should and would ; lest our candle be out, or a feeble snuff in the socket, before we set to work. Remember, upon this moment depends Eternity ; nor is the accurate work of our Salvation, which must last to Eternity, and be seen in heaven, to be done by a dim foul light. John xii. 35, 36 ; 2 Cor. vi. 2.—*Bp. Gauden.*

I think it so wild and unadvisable a thing to put off the beginning to provide all graces to a death-bed, that I think it uneasy enough so much as to exercise *then* those that were acquired before ; men being, in that state, commonly unable so much as to reap the consolation they have been sowing all along a pious life. S. John xii. 35, 36.—*R. Boyle.*

V. 10.—There is no oil to be bought by the foolish virgins, when the Bridegroom is come : Noah entered the ark, before the flood came ; Lot went out of Sodom, before it rained fire and brimstone ; the children of Israel sprinkled the blood of the Paschal lamb on their doors, before the destroying Angel slew all the first-born in Egypt ; in Ezekiel, in the Revelations, the servants of God are marked and sealed, before God's wrath is executed. All these are but types, signifying that, if we mean to escape, we must take advantage of the time, “agree with our adversary in the way, lest he pass us over to the Judge, the Judge to the sergeant, the sergeant to the gaoler.” . . . Wherefore provide physic, before thou art sick, and righteousness, before judgment. Ecclus. xviii. 19, &c. ; 2 Cor. vi. 1–3.—*Bp. Lake.*

God hath made no death-bed Covenant.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 11.—*Open to us.* Hell is like to be full of good wishes, but heaven full of good works. S. Luke xvi. 24, 27.—*Guevara.*

V. 13.—*Watch.* When you read the Scriptures, you see a Religion, that is all life, and spirit, and joy in God, that supposes our souls risen from earthly desires and bodily indulgences, to prepare for another body, another world, and other enjoyments. You see Christians represented, as “Temples of the Holy Ghost,” as candidates for an Eternal crown, as *watchful virgins*, that have their lamps always burning, always in expectation of the Bridegroom. But can he be thought to have this joy in God, this care of Eternity, this watchful spirit, who has not zeal enough to rise to his prayers? When you look into the writings and lives of the first Christians, you see the same spirit, that you see in the Scriptures. All is reality, life, and action. Watching and prayers, self-denial and mortification, was the common business of their lives. xxvi. 40; Job. xv. 4; Eph. vi. 13–18.—*Wm. Law.*

Nothing withdraws men so much from the service of sin, as the thought of impending death. Eccl. xi. 9; xii. 13, 14.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 15.—In the parable of the Talents the sums, committed to the servants, were different; But their improvement of them was equal (each having doubled his deposit); and therefore their reward was equal also. But in the parable of the *Pounds* (S. Luke xix. 17–19) all the servants had an equal sum, committed to them; but they made a different improvement of them, and were therefore differently rewarded.—*Marsh.*

One.—Let us adore the ever blessed Spirit, who worketh all our works in us, and distributes His manifold gifts to the Church, and to all her faithful children, according to His own most holy will and pleasure. Let us reverence these His gifts in others, and be contented with our own portion, though never so small. It is often a great gift to be without those gifts, by which others are distinguished. To be sensible of our own spiritual poverty and want is often the best and safest gift of all. 1 Cor. xii. 1–11 ; Ps. cxxxi. 3 ; Rom. xii. 3–8, 10 ; Jer. xl. 5.—*Wogan.*

V. 18.—This talent is not to be set aside *in a napkin* ; that is, to be treated in an effeminate and slothful manner ; nor is it to lie *buried in the earth* ; I mean, to be overlaid with the busy cares of this world.—*S. Jerome.*

It may be writ on the grave of every sinner, who lives and dies in that state ; “ Here lies the man, that never did God an hour’s work in all his life.” S. Luke xiii. 17.—*Gurnall.*

V. 20.—No man need blow a trumpet in his own praise. What we do well the Lord will report to all the world. v. 35 ; vi. 2 ; 1 Cor. iv. 5.—*Caryl.*

V. 21.—Honour, profit, and pleasure are distinct goods upon earth, and are seldom found together. It is not so with eternal goods, in which to be honest is to be profitable ; and to be profitable, delectable. Eternal honours are accompanied with immense riches, and they are both attended with pleasures without end. All this is signified by the Lord, when He received the faithful servant into Glory : *first*, He honours him, commending

him for a *good and faithful servant* ; then, He enriches him, delivering many things into his hands ; and so admits him into the joy and pleasure of his Lord ; thereby signifying the greatness of this joy ; not saying that this joy should enter into him, but that he should *enter into joy*, and into no other joy, but that *of his Lord*. So great is the joy of that celestial Paradise, that it wholly fills and embraces the Blessed souls, which enter into heaven, as into an immense sea of pleasure and delight. The joys of the earth enter into the hearts of those, who possess them, but fill them not ; because the capacity of man's heart is greater than they can satisfy ; but the joys of heaven in the Blessed enter into themselves, and fill and overflow them in all parts. Ps. xvii. 16 ; lxxxi. 11 ; S. Luke xv. 22, 23 ; 1 Cor. ii. 9 ; Eph. i. 23 ; iii. 19.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

O my soul, when I contemplate the joy, that shall be, I am quite unable to speak. My soul faints almost with holy surprise ; for this joy will be within and without, beneath and above, around and beyond. Psa. xxxii. 7, 8.—*Bonaventura.*

V. 22.—He, who saves his neighbour's soul, as well as his own, is the person, who doubles his talent. xviii. 15 ; S. John i. 41, 45 ; S. James v. 19, 20.—*Quarles.*

V. 23.—Oh, what will that joy be, when the soul being perfectly prepared for joy, and joy prepared by Christ for the soul, it shall be our work, our business, Eternally to rejoice. And it seems the Saints' joy will be greater than the torment of the damned : for their torment is the torment of creatures, " prepared for the

devil and his angels ;" but our joy is *the joy of the Lord* : even our Lord's *own* joy we shall enter into. Isa. li. 11 ; Zeph. iii. 17 ; S. John xvii. 22.—*Baxter*.

V. 24.—The idle man is more perplexed what to do, than the laborious in doing what he ought. Gen. xliii. 10 ; Prov. xiii. 4 ; xv. 19 ; xxvi. 13–16.—*Lord Capel*.

There is but one solid pleasure in life, and that is our duty. How miserable, then, how unwise, how unpardonable are they, who make that one a pain ! xi. 29, 30 ; Gen. xxv. 32 ; 1 S. John v. 3.—*Dean Young*.

V. 25.—*There thou hast that is thine*. Nothing can exceed the emphatic beauty of the original, nor more strongly express the morose surly brevity of the slothful servant ; the very words—(in the *Greek*)—sound the thing and are a lively picture of the man's mind : no translation can come up to them.—*Dr. Dodd*.

A dull, uneasy, complaining spirit, is, of all tempers, most contrary to religion ; for it disowns that God, whom it pretends to adore. For he sufficiently disowns God, who does not adore Him, as a Being of infinite goodness. Deut. xxviii. 47.—*Wm. Law*.

V. 26.—Either exercise thy graces, or Satan will exercise thy corruptions. xxvi. 1, 2 ; 2 Sam. xi. 1, 2.—*Gurnall*.

V. 27.—*At my coming*. The day of payment—'tis a long day ; 'tis not till the Resurrection. A thrifty labourer asks but meat and drink for the present ; let his wages stay, till his work be done. So saith a good Christian, "Lord, supply me with necessaries here, but reward me hereafter." As Chrysostom saith ; "They, that put out their money to use, are sorry to have it paid

too soon ; the longer it is lent, the more profit it brings. Thou, that would'st have thy reward here, what wilt thou do at that great day of payment ? When another man's hands shall be full, thine shall be empty." vi. 2 ; S. Luke xvii. 25 ; Heb. xi. 35.—*Bp. Brownrig.*

V. 28.—Every mercy from so good a Father comes forth twins—a gift and a bond together ; a present payment and a future pawn ; a sum paid down, and an annuity made over : the having bestowed favours being His greatest obligation to continue them. Ps. cxv. 14 ; cxvii. 2 ; S. John x. 10 ; Eph. iii. 20.—*Dr. Hammond.*

V. 31.—Do we admire the calm simple grandeur, with which that mighty event, the *beginning*, the Creation of the world is recorded in Genesis ? Let us turn our eyes to the picture now before us of the *end* of that Creation, at the second coming of the Lord. Is it less calm, less simply grand, than the other ? Trace we not in both the hand of the same Spirit ? Is there not here the same Divine original ? The most awful event to be transacted on the stage of an assembled Universe, and involving Eternity in its consequences, is set forth in language, that a child may understand, and illustrated by the common every-day similitude of a mixed flock of sheep and goats, feeding together during the day, divided and separated, as the Eastern custom was, when the night cometh. He, who spake as never man spake, saying, "Let there be light, and there was light," said also, *When the Son of man shall come in His Glory, &c. ;*

"Whose story none can tell

"But He, whose's every word's a miracle."

J. FORD.

How shall we bear the blaze of the real and actual presence of Christ—that blaze, which either glorifies the soul with its light, or scorches and withers it for all Eternity? Mal. iii. 2; Zech. xii. 10; Rev. xx. 11.—*W. Archer Butler.*

V. 33.—Their doom is already ominously foreshown in the places, which they occupy, on the right, or on the left; good by a natural affinity having gathered to good, and evil to evil. And thus He, to whom mercy is welcome, as judgment is a strange work, addresses Himself first to those, who are the objects of *His* mercy, as others had been the object of *theirs*. . . . Men are divided and doomed, according to a single law, as they were merciful, or unmerciful; according as their faith wrought in active deeds of love to their brethren, or testified that it was no faith, in that it was barren and unfruitful of these. Gal. v. 6; Rom. ii. 6–9; 1 S. John iii. 23.—*Abp. Trench.*

V. 34.—What can be uttered more sweetly, than “*Come?*” What can be conceived more lamentable and more awful, than “*Depart?*” These are two such words, as exceed, the one in Blessedness, the other in horror, all, that we can ever hear. Deut. xxx. 15–20.—*S. Augustine.*

Come ye, &c. He speaks not to some few Saints, that had great estates to bestow on charitable uses, but to all His Saints, poor as well as rich: *Ye*, that is, all such, as had bread, you gave it; *ye*, that had not bread or money to give, when you could not draw out your purse, “you drew out your souls to the hungry” (Isa. lx. 10). . . . David’s good will in desiring to build the Temple was as much in God’s account, as if he had done it. Many shall

be at the last Day rewarded by Christ for clothing and feeding the poor, who when on earth had neither clothes nor food to give ; yet having had a heart to give shall be reckoned among the greatest benefactors to the poor. S. Mark xii. 43, 44 ; 2 Cor. viii. 12.—*Gurnall*.

V. 35.—*For I was an hungered.* That Abel suffered, that Noah saved the world, that Abraham embraced the faith, that Moses received the Law, that Peter ascended the cross, bending himself backwards—all this God passes by in silence ; and this, this alone He proclaims aloud—that “ the poor have been fed.” In Heaven the hungry man’s provision stands first to be mentioned ; in Heaven the contributions, made to the poor man, are the first to be settled ; money, laid out upon the poor man, is the first item in the Divine register. Blessed is he, whose name is read over, whensoever the account, kept of the poor man, is audited in Heaven ! Prov. xix. 17 ; Ps. cxiii. 9.—*Pet. Chrysologus*.

V. 36—Probably S. Paul had an eye to this word of Christ, when upon the mention of the kind *visits*, which Onesiphorus had made him in his bonds at Rome, he prayed, “ The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that Day (2 Tim. i. 18), when such visits shall be remembered, and abundantly recompensed, and accounted, as visits made to Christ himself.—*M. Henry*.

V. 37.—As God sees such sins in you, as you cannot see, so He sees such graces in you, as you cannot perceive. viii. 8–11 ; xv. 26–29.—*Bp. J. Taylor*.

V. 40.—In our own body the head is above, the feet are upon the earth ; yet, in any throng of men, when

any one treads on your foot, does not the head say, "You are treading upon *me*?" No one has trodden on your head, nor on your tongue; so Christ the Head, which no one treadeth on, saith, *I was an hungered, &c.* Acts ix. 4; Heb. xiii. 2.—*S. Augustine.*

As often as you stretch forth your hand to give alms, think of Christ. x. 42; Col. iii. 17.—*S. Jerome.*

Oh, who would not be a giver, when God is the receiver? 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Heb. vi. 10.—*Bp. Medley.*

The Christian's worship and works are acts of faith and avail to his salvation, because he does not do them, as availing. Neh. xiii. 14-22; Ps. lxii. 12.—*J. W. Newman.*

V. 41.—By these words are denoted the separation from God, the curse of God, fire, and eternity. Behold in four words what Hell is—to be separated from God, to be accursed of God, to be condemned to fire, and that for ever! 1 Th. i. 8, 9.—*Dr. Gobinet.*

It wearies us, do we only hear of the doctrine of "taking up the cross," but the weight of this sentence of Christ—how shall we bear it? Jer. xii. 5.—*S. Bernard.*

V. 42.—If he is cast into the flames, who refused to give bread to the hungry man, where will his portion be, who took it, and appropriated it to himself? 1 Cor. vi. 8; S. James v. 1-6.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 44.—They did not think that Christ had been shut in prison with John the Baptist, or that He had begged in Lazarus.—*Farindon.*

Many accustom themselves to think that they shall be judged simply by what they *on the whole* become, not by the several actions of their lives. xii. 36 ; xviii. 33 ; Ps. l. 21 ; Eccl. xii. 14.—*Dr. Pusey.*

V. 46.—*Everlasting—Eternal.* As, in the original, one term is employed to express the same thing—the endless duration of time—it is difficult to account for the introduction into the translation of a second word, seemingly injurious to the simplicity of the text ; unless it is meant to convey a distinction here on this most solemn and awful subject. And the distinction may be this ; that *Eternal* has a retrospective sense, as applying to some thing, which has always existed ; whereas *Everlasting* points only to an endless duration of time for the future. According to this view, the expression in Ps. xciii. 3 has been pointed out, as not strictly correct, “Thou art from everlasting.” In a doctrinal sense, the distinction is certainly important. The joys of the righteous have been prepared from *Eternity, from the foundation of the world* ; whereas the punishments of the wicked had their beginning in time, being the effect of men’s sin. The latter are not properly *Eternal*, but *everlasting*. Isa. xxxiii. 14 ; Dan. xii. 2 ; S. Matt. xviii. 8 ; S. Mark iii. 29 ; ix. 44, 46, 48 ; Heb. vi. 2 ; S. Jude 13.—*J. Ford.*

Were these expressions thrown out, only to frighten us into our duty by false terrors ? Doth God, who forbids us to “do evil, that good may come,” use equivocal words, and pious frauds, in order to make us honest men, and lovers of truth ? Who expects *Eternal* happiness on any other footing, than God’s promise ? And hath he not

the menaces of God to fill him with the dread of Eternal punishment, couched in the same terms, as to its duration ? v. 18 ; Rom. vi. 23.—*Skelton*.

I believe that they, who have their part in this Resurrection shall “meet the Lord in the air;” and when the Blessed sentence is pronounced upon them, they shall “for ever be with the Lord,” in joys unspeakable, and full of Glory. God shall “wipe all tears from their eyes:” there shall be no fear of sorrow, no mourning, or death ; a friend shall never go away from thence, and an enemy shall never enter ; there shall be fulness without want ; light eternal, brighter than the sun ; day and no night ; joy and no weeping ; difference in degree, and yet all full ; there shall be love without dissimulation, excellency without envy, multitudes without confusion, music without discord : there the understandings are rich, the will is satisfied, the affections are all love and all joy ; and they shall reign with God and Christ for ever and ever. Rev. vii. 14–17 ; xxi. 1–5, 22–27 ; xxii. 1–6, 14, 16, 17.—*Bp. J. Taylor*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

V. 7.—The great uncertainty, attending the endeavours of the learned to identify this woman, may at least teach us this useful lesson ; not to have “men’s persons in admiration” (S. Jude 16), but rather to withdraw our eyes from the creature, and to “look unto Jesus ;” for here all is sure. Let our thoughts, too, be fixed, not so much on the particular person, as on her one object of dutiful and earnest affection on the costly act of her faith and love, on its acceptance and Blessed reward. Her name is little to us ; her deed is everything. She is “unknown, and yet well known.” The durable monument of her piety stands before the Church in all ages, as a living example ; it teaches us to sympathize with the Lord in His sufferings, openly to honour Him, what time He is “rejected of men,” and to anoint with our good works His representatives—*the poor, whom we have always with us* ; causing by this means the sweet savour of our faith and love so to be diffused around us, that others may go and do likewise, “to the praise and glory of God.” v. 16 ; xxv. 40, 41 ; Prov. xxxi. 30, 31 ; Acts ix. 48.—*J. Ford.*

V. 8.—*They had indignation, &c.* Never, O Lord, let us murmur at what’s bestowed on Thee by others ; nor be discouraged, when they censure us for what we bestow on Thee ourselves. Thou gavest us all we have ; ’tis fit we restore Thee some part of Thine own. Never let us

envy the good works of others, nor seek pretences to undervalue their merit. Let us not use religion, as a cloak of iniquity ; nor offer our God that, which costs us nothing. 2 Sam. xxiv. 24 ; S. Luke xv. 28 ; 1 Cor. iv. 7.—*Austin.*

V. 11.—There is no contradiction between our Lord's declaration here, and at xxviii. 20. As we are members of the Catholick Church, Christ is always with us "to bless His own Ordinances to the good of our souls ; but, in our private walk and experience, as Christians, the Bridegroom at times seems to be taken away from us. Nevertheless, the *poor are always with us*. Whatever be our religious feelings, the plain practical duties of life, especially the works of charity and mercifulness, may and must be *always* attended to. (See a like lesson taught S. John ii. 4, 5.)—*J. Ford.*

V. 12.—*She did it for my burial.* If we were to send a son, or a friend, to take possession of any place in Court or foreign parts, we should send him out in the best equipage. Let us not grudge to set down our friends in the ante-chamber of Heaven, the grave, in as good a manner, as without vain gloriousness and wastefulness we may. Gen. xxii. ; 2 Sam. xv. 30 ; Jer. xvi. 7 ; S. Luke vii. 12 ; S. John xi. 38 ; xiv. 12.—*Dr. Donne.*

V. 13.—*Wheresoever, &c.* An argument this for the truth of Christianity. No King can purchase with all his wealth immortality to any one action of his life. Ps. xlix. 10–13 ; lxii. 6 ; Gen. xi. 4 ; Deut. vi. 20 ; S. Luke i. 48.—*Bengel.*

If the acts of duty and care, which we perform towards the bodies of the dead, are not forgotten before God, how

great must be the reward of our alms, when done to the living? xxv. 34-40.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 16.—*From that time.* Oh, stay, my soul, at the first step downwards; else every pace will increase thy speed, 'till thou comest to the bottom. Oh, stay, my soul, at the first step in sin; for thou knowest not where the second will lead thee. Verses 70, 74; S. Luke iii. 19; 2 Tim. iii. 13.—*Austin.*

V. 17.—*Where wilt Thou, &c.* How significant the juxtaposition! How striking the contrast! Light and darkness, life and death, are here set before us! The heart of the true Christian is in Christ, and in the Ordinances of His Church; *Where wilt Thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?* The heart of the false disciple is in himself, and in his covetousness; *What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?* Ask thyself, which of these two is the question of thy heart? Jer. xxii. 17; Ps. cxix. 36; S. John vi. 68, 69; Rom. xiv. 7-9.—*J. Ford.*

This then is the right preparation for Passion week; to think seriously of our sins, which were the cause of Christ's sufferings, to sorrow over them, and to repent of them. And therefore Lent is appointed by the Church to be a season of humiliation, and penance, that by passing through this "strait gate" we may be prepared to receive the pardon of the sins, of which we have repented, declared to us from the Cross of Christ. Isa. xxvi. 20; Zech. xii. 10-14; 1 Pet. v. 6.—*A. W. Hare.*

V. 22.—*Exceeding sorrowful.* A loose erroneous professor doth the devil more service, than a whole troop

of such, as pretend to no religion. . . Oh, how Christians hang down their heads upon the scandal of any of their company ; as all the Patriarchs were troubled, when the cup was found in one of their Sacks. Gen. xliv. 12, 13 ; 2 Cor. vii. 8-16.—*Gurnall*.

Learn thyself, and fear thyself. The disciples would say *Lord, is it I ?* that shall betray Thee ? Peter did not ask, “ Master, is it John ? ” nor John, “ Master, is it Thomas ? ” But every one, *Is it I ?* True indeed, I have a deceitful flesh, a revolting heart, a traitor in my bosom ; it may as soon be I, as another person. v. 35 ; 2 Kings viii. 13 ; Phil. ii. 3 ; Gal. vi. 1.—*Bp. Reynolds*.

The humble, in proportion as he grows in grace, becomes ever continually more humble ; and the more he approaches to be a Saint, the more he apprehends himself to be a sinner. Gen. xviii. 27 ; Ps. xix. 12 ; xlix. 18 ; Dan. ix. 1-10.—*J. W. Newman*.

V. 24.—*Woe unto that man, &c.* The Divine foresight has not the effect of rendering the conduct of the traitor less criminal. Acts. ii. 23.—*Bengel*.

V. 26.—These expressions, “ *This is My Body,* ” and “ *This is My Blood ;* ” that is, symbolical and Sacramental signs, seals, and representations of His Body, and Blood, and Passion, are most agreeable to the common dialect and idiotisms of the Jews ; to the genius and language of their country, and the place where, and persons with whom our Saviour lived ; as is manifest by several phrases and parallel expressions of the Holy Ghost (Gen. xl. 26 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 11 ; Dan. ii. 38 ; 1 Cor. x. 4 ; Gal. iv. 24 ; Rev. xvii. 9). The Body and Blood of Christ may be said

to be present in the Eucharist, when Christ's Body (though comprehended in Heaven) that is, the gracious effect of His death and passion, goeth along with the Sacred symbols, and is really present to the believing receiver. This is a virtual, yet real, Presence.—*Bp. Barlow.*

V. 27.—*Gave thanks.* It is observable, that, however those ancient Liturgies have been altered and corrupted in after times by many additions and interpolations, yet there are in all of them still remaining many excellent and Divine forms of prayer and thanksgiving, wherein they do all perfectly agree, and which, therefore, cannot reasonably be thought to have any other, than Apostolical order and appointment, delivered to the several nations and people, together with the first preaching and plantation of Christianity among them. Such, for example, is the *Sursum corda*, in the office of the Communion ; the Priest saying, *Lift up your hearts*, and the people answering, *We lift them up unto the Lord.* There is no Liturgy in any Church of Christ to this day, but hath this form. Such is the excellent form of *thanksgiving* in the same office of the Communion, to be performed by the Priest and people ; the Priest saying, *Let us give thanks unto our Lord God ;* and the people answering, *It is meet and right so to do.* *Psa. cxlv. 7 ; Heb. xiii. 15, 16.—Bp. Bull.*

All of it. Are we worthy to be *Christians*, and not worthy to be *Communicants* ? *Heb. x. 19-26.—Farindon.*

V. 29.—The Supper of the Lord superseded the Jewish Passover. Heavenly Mysteries, still far beyond, will

succeed to the Supper of the Lord. S. John i. 50, 51 ; v. 20 ; xiv. 12 ; vi. 62.—*Bengel.*

V. 30.—This is that, which we read in the Psalms “The poor shall eat and be satisfied ; and they that seek the Lord shall *praise* Him. Isa. xli. 17 ; Ps. xxii. 26 ; xxxiii. 1.—*Bede.*

It were well for us, if in seasons of trouble we betook ourselves to *praise* and not only to prayer. . . . So far from being unsuited to circumstances of perplexity and danger, the song of praise should at least mingle with the cry of prayer. If you would arm yourselves for trouble and duty, you should recount the marvellous acts of the Lord, as well as supplicate the communications of His grace. This is too much overlooked and neglected by Christians. They are more familiar with the earnest petition than the grateful anthem. Before they departed—the Redeemer to the terrible Agony, the disciples to the dreaded separation—the last thing, that they did, was to join in the chanting of thankful psalms. It was not till they had *sung a hymn* ; but then it was, that *they went out into the mount of Olives*. Ps. xli. 1, 7 ; Neh. viii. 10 ; Acts. v. 14 ; Heb. xii. 2.—*H. Melvill.*

V. 36.—*Sit ye here, while I, &c.*—It is a sign that we are not yet mature for sufferings, when we are allowed to stand at a distance, and view the sufferings of others. A Christian should consider his exemption from the cross, not so much a sign of God’s particular favour, as of his own weakness. Acts ix. 16 ; John xv. 2 ; Heb. xii. 5–9 ; Phil. i. 29, 30.—*Rambach.*

V. 38.—*He saith unto them, &c.* It is to my mind a most gracious instance of our Lord's exceeding love to us, that He Himself drank the cup of human suffering to the very bottom ; that no servant of Christ can fear his death so painfully, or feel himself so forsaken and miserable, whilst actually undergoing it, as his Master did before him. Heb. ii. 14–18 ; xii. 1–4.—*Dr. Arnold.*

V. 39.—All our repinings, and murmurings, and discontents arise from this ; we cannot say, *Thy Will be done !* S. James iv. 2, 3.—*Farindon.*

V. 40.—'Tis the short reproof, that stays, like a stab, in the memory ; and many times three words do more good, than an idle discourse of many hours. 2 Sam. xii. 7 ; Acts ix. 4.—*O. Feltham.*

V. 44.—How consoling is it, though *He left them*, He did not cast them away. Isa. liv. 7, 8.—*Rambach.*

Why did Christ pray *three times*, rather than twice, or only once, or four times ? In order to shew us, not only that our prayer should be addressed to the Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; but, moreover, that we might learn hence perseveringly to implore the pardon of the past, deliverance from our present troubles, and a defence against dangers to come. 2 Cor. xii. 8.—*T. Aquinas.*

V. 45.—These three disciples had before fallen asleep on Mount Thabor. Alas ! is it not lamentable, that we should be so unfeeling and so addicted to sloth, that neither the mercies of God, nor His corrections, can rouse us ? Jer. xxii. 21 ; Zeph. iii. 2.—*Rambach.*

V. 48.—The same sign doth the world give the devil ; “Whomsoever I shall caress and favour, whomsoever I shall heap honour and riches on, whomsoever I shall embrace and *kiss, that same is he : hold him fast.*” Such a darling of the world is too often fast bound in the silken bands of voluptuousness, and consigned over to be bound in chains of massy darkness. S. Luke xi. 21 ; Ps. lxxiii. 3–12 ; Rom. vi. 16 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26.—*Bp. Hopkins.*

V. 50.—“We walked in the House of God as friends.” Our Saviour, to notify this prophecy to be exactly fulfilled by Judas, saluteth him in the name of a *friend*, while he came to betray Him. (Confer verse 23 of this Ch. with Ps. xli. 9.)—*Dean Jackson.*

V. 50.—Blessed be Thy Name, O Holy Jesus, who hast sanctified to us all our natural infirmities and passions by vouchsafing to be in fear, and trembling, and sore amazement, by being bound and imprisoned, by being harassed and dragged with cords of violence and rude hands, by being drenched “in the brook in the way” (Ps. cx. 7), by being sought after, like a thief, and used, like a sinner—who art the most Holy, and most innocent, cleaner than an Angel, and brighter than the morning star ! Rom. xv. 1–3 ; 2 Cor. viii. 9.—*Bp. J. Taylor.*

V. 56.—*Then all the disciples, &c.* (v. 35). Impartial biography is to be found only in the Scriptures.—*R. Cecil.*

These were stars fixed in their orb, though clouded and overspread for a time ; this was but a mist, or fog, which overspreads the earth in the morning, till the sun be risen ; and then it clears up and proves a fine day.—*Flavel.*

V. 58.—Venturing on the borders of danger is much akin to presumptuous carelessness. A man goes on pretty well, till he ventures within the atmosphere of danger ; but the atmosphere of danger infatuates him. The ship is got within the influence of the vortex, and will not obey the helm. David was sitting in this atmosphere on the house-top and was ensnared and fell. Matt. vi. 13 ; Jas. i. 13-16.—*R. Cecil.*

V. 61.—They did not doubt, that, if they might make men to believe that He said any thing against the honour and majesty of the Temple, He should seem to all men most worthy of death. Acts vi. 13 ; xxi. 28, 29.—*Homilies.*

The Tabernacle preceded the Temple ; so did our Blessed Lord pass from His Tabernacle of Human suffering to His Temple wherein He was Glorified. The Tabernacle was “in the wilderness,” the Temple in “the city of the great King ;” so did Christ suffer on earth, to be exalted afterwards to the right hand of God. (Conf. S. John i. 14—“dwelt” or *tabernacled*—with ii. 19.) Ps. cxxxii. ; Heb. ix. 11, 12.—*J. Ford.*

V. 62.—Under false accusations, be *silent* ; and leave your actions to shame your adversaries.—*Bp. Medley.*

There is a dignity in *silence*, which, though we must not assume it for our own sakes, we may prudently preserve for our cause’s sake. And, let me add, that there is scarcely any more salutary exercise of self-denial, than to suppress that very thing, which, on ground of feeling, we should be eager to send abroad. Prov. xii. 23 ; xiv. 33.—*A. Knox.*

V. 64.—How will all things, at the last Day, look with another face! How the humble self-denying Christian, that is now the hissing and off-scouring of the world, will then be exalted above all heaven and seated in the same throne with the Son of God! And how all those mighty nothings, that scorn and laugh now at the religious soul, will tremble in that Day, like an aspen-leaf, and wish that they had considered the things, which belonged to their everlasting peace, while “the candle of the Lord shined over their heads,” and God caressed them to their happiness! xii. 41; xix. 30; Ps. cxii. 9, 10; Wisd. v.—*Dr. Horneck.*

V. 65.—How wondrous is the Grace of the Gospel! The contrivances of God’s mercy in saving us far exceed all, that we can conceive and think! In the prospect of our own appearance before the Divine Tribunal, laden, as we are, with our sins, we can yet look for help to that very quarter, to which Jesus looked in vain. We can look to the person of our Judge; to One, who is not our enemy, as Caiaphas was His, but to One, who is the friend of all those, who “truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel.” For this cause, He is “the Son of Man,” to whom “all judgment is committed,” that He might deal compassionately with His brethren on that Day, and not “reward us after our deservings.” “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!” S. John xv. 14; Rom. viii. 34; 2 Cor. v. 21.—*J. Ford.*

He hath spoken blasphemy. What men want of reason in their opinions, they generally supply and make up with rage. Verse 74; Acts vii. 54–57.—*Abp. Tillotson.*

V. 67.—*Then did they spit, &c.*—In time of prosperity hypocrisy lies hid in the heart, like a nest in the green leaves ; but, when the winter of adversity has blown away the leaves, every one may see it without searching. Prov. xvii. 17 ; S. Luke ii. 35 ; xxii. 28.—*Flavel.*

What measure can be too hard for Him, that is denounced worthy of death ! Now those foul mouths defile Thy Blessed face with their impure spittle the venomous froth of their malice. Now those cruel hands are lifted up to buffet Thy Sacred cheeks. Now scorn and insult triumph over Thine humble patience. *Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who is he, that smote Thee ?* O dear Jesus, what a beginning is here of a Passion ! Thou there standest bound, condemned, spat upon, buffeted, derided, by malicious sinners. Thou art bound, who camest to “loose the bands of death.” Thou art condemned, whose sentence must acquit the world. Thou art spat upon, that art “fairer than the sons of men.” Thou art buffeted, “in whose mouth was no guile.” Thou art derided, who art “clothed with Glory and Majesty !”—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 69.—*Sat without in the palace.* God doth not usually keep them from the commission of sin, who do not keep themselves from the occasions and appearances of sin. Gen. xxxiv. 1 ; S. Jude 21, 24.—*Bp. Hopkins.*

How came it to pass, when those holy men, David and Joseph, were tempted to the commission of the same crime, that one resisted, and that the other yielded ; nay, that the older Saint yielded, and the younger maintained his innocence ? How was this ? The difference seems to have arisen from the difference of their positions, severally,

at the critical time of Satan's attack on each of them. The tempter found David idling away his time at home, when he ought to have been fighting the battles of the Lord (2 Sam. xi. 1). He found him at "ease in Zion;" whereas he found Joseph "going about his business" (Gen. xxxix. 11) engaged in the diligent performance of his domestic duty. In one case, the fiery dart of the enemy fell, as it were, upon tinder; in the other case, it fell upon a rock. A like instructive contrast may be drawn between Judith, and Dinah the daughter of Jacob (Gen. xxxiv. 1, 2). The former, because she exposed herself, on a call of duty, to all the perils of the Assyrian camp, was preserved in the midst of them without harm (Judith x). The latter, because she left her father's tent from a motive of idle curiosity—"to see the daughters of the land"—was suffered to fall into the fatal snare, obtaining no help whatever from God. Let us then be "in the fear of the Lord all the day long," lest "Satan have the advantage of us." Judg. xviii. 27; 2 Pet. v. 8-11.—*J. Ford.*

V. 72.—Christ in this *crow of the cock* hath given Peter as well an example to follow, as an occasion to repent; as well taught him in the execution of his Apostleship, as converted him from the estate of a backslider (Isa. lviii. 1; 2 Tim. iv. 5). A true Minister, that loves Christ and His sheep, must have *the wings* of a cock, to rouse up, first, himself from security; and then, "being converted," powerfully to awaken and "strengthen" others (Luke xxii. 32); and he must have *the watchfulness* of a cock, to be ever ready to discover and forewarn danger (Ezek. xxxiii. 3); and *the voice* of a cock, to "cry aloud" and tell Israel

of their sins (Isa. lviii. 1) and terrify "the roaring lion," that seeks to devour them; and, lastly, *the hours* of a cock, to "preach in season and out of season" the glad tidings of Salvation.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 75.—He, who before had taught me by his good life how I should stand, hath now taught me by his repentance how, in case of my falling, I should rise again. Ps. li. 18.—*S. Jerome.*

Ask the very soul of Peter, and it shall undoubtedly make you itself this answer; "My eager protestations, made in the glory of my ghostly strength, I am ashamed of; but those crystal tears, wherewith my sin and weakness was bewailed, have procured my endless joy: my strength hath been my ruin, and my fall my stay." Ps. lxxviii. 10.—*Hooker.*

He went out. It is not enough to break with sin, unless you break with sinners too. Ps. cxix. 115; Gen. xxxv. 4.—*Sam. Lavington.*

Peter denied Christ once, and wept for ever after it. We often deny Him, and never weep for it at all. Ps. li. 3; xxv. 6; 1 Cor. v. 2.—*S. Augustine.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

V. 1.—Our Saviour, who appeared so early before the judgment-seat of the Jews, has obtained for us the privilege of early appearing before the throne of Grace. . . Are the slaves of Satan so early abroad for the execution of their wicked designs, which they will not delay? And shall not “the children of light” avail themselves of the morning hours, when the mind is calm, and serene, and best disposed for spiritual prayer, meditation, and devout exercises? Ps. xxxvi. 4; lxiii. 1-7; Prov. iv. 16; Micah ii. 1.—*Rambach*.

V. 3.—*The thirty pieces of silver*. One of the Fathers has truly and beautifully observed, that “Judas remembered the price, for which he sold his Lord; but he did not know the price, which his Lord paid for him.” 1 S. Peter i. 18.—*J. Ford*.

V. 4.—*What is that to us? See thou to that*. This will express the difference at all times between the fellow-feelings of the unbeliever and the faithful. No burden, that our brother can bear, is *nothing to us*; his burden is our burden, as our burden is the burden of his and our merciful Saviour; how much more, when it is under the weight of our own common guilt, that he labours! Gen. iv. 9; 2 Sam. xviii. 33; Phil. ii. 21; Gal. vi. 2.—*Is. Williams*.

In the repentance of Judas we find the three parts of repentance; the contrition of the heart, the confession

of the mouth, and the satisfaction of the work. In outward appearance it did far exceed and pass the repentance of Peter. . . But Judas wanted faith, whereby he did despair of the goodness and mercy of God. Rom. iii. 25.—*Homilies*.

I am persuaded, that, if Judas—Judas, who betrayed Christ—had said unto Christ what he said to the High Priest, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood*, he might have been saved. Acts iii. 15, 19; Rom. x. 11-13.—*S. Ambrose*.

Sense of an irretrievable error in life, fastening upon the mind, is a foretaste of hell. Wisd. v.—*Adam*.

A sad thought it is, that an immortal soul, born for Eternity, Redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ, more precious than all the money in the world, more precious than the world itself, more precious than a thousand such worlds as ours, should throw itself away on mere dust and trash. Lam. iv. 1, 2.—*Bp. Medley*.

V. 6.—*And the chief priests took, &c.* Think how many poor souls lost heaven and now lie expecting a miserable eternity for their service and homage to a world, that thinks itself every whit as well without them, and is just as merry, as it was when they were in it. Is it therefore worth your while to lose the smallest degree of virtue for the sake of pleasing so bad a master, and so false a friend, as the world is? Is it worth your while to bow your knee to such an idol as this, that will so soon have neither eyes, nor ears, nor a heart, to regard you—instead of serving that great, and holy, and mighty God, that will make all His servants partakers of His own Eternity? Gen. xi. 23; Ex. xxii. 1.—*Wm. Law*.

It is not lawful, &c. Bp. Reynolds observes that "though they were afraid to defile their chests, they were not afraid to defile their consciences." To this remark we may add, that, though they now scrupled to put this particular money into the treasury, yet shortly after they scrupled not to employ other money to the basest of all imaginable purposes, to furthering the work of the devil by buying up, as it were, the truth of Christ's Resurrection; so as to defeat, as far as in them lay, the glorious end, for which He suffered. xxiii. 24-30; xxviii. 12, 13.—*J. Ford.*

V. 7.—*To bury strangers in.* Therefore is the burial-place of Christ assigned to *strangers*, in order that he, who, as a stranger and pilgrim, has kept himself from carnal defilements may find his resting place in Christ. Ps. cxix. 19; Heb. xi. 13; 1 S. Pet. ii. 11.—*S. Ambrose.*

V. 9.—Zechariah represented Christ both by personal office, and by matter of fact. Zechariah demanded faith and hearty piety of his flock for his prophetic pains amongst them; and they tender him a base reward, *thirty pieces of silver*. So Christ required of the Jews for His Evangelical function amongst them only this, that they would believe Him, and that they would worship God; but they valued Him at thirty pieces of silver. Again, as the Prophet indignantly rejected both the base stipend, that was offered him, and the flock, which did tender it; so Christ cast off the Jews, which had thus disesteemed Him, and delivered them over to be destroyed by the Romans.—*Castrus.*

V. 12.—The silence of Christ expiated the guilt of Adam's prevarication. Gen. iii. 12, 15.—*Tertullian.*

V. 18.—*Envy* cast an Angel out of heaven ; it banished man from Paradise. It was envy, that first tainted this earth with a brother's blood, that induced the brethren to sell their brother ; (Gen. xxxvii. 11 ; Acts vii. 9 ;) that drove Moses out of Egypt, (Acts vii. 27 ;) that stirred up the spirit of Aaron against his brother, and covered Miriam with the shame of leprosy. (Numb. xii. 2 ; Psa. cvi. 16 ; Deut. ix. 20). To speak briefly—a thing, which the mind shudders at, which the sight shrinks from in dismay, and which the ear cannot sustain—envy stretched itself so far, as to compass the death of Christ. Gal. v. 19–22 ; James iv. 5 ; 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.—*Pet. Chrysologus.*

V. 19.—A special favour was thus vouchsafed to the Governor by this timely warning, beyond what was sent to the Jews, who indeed had been amply warned in other ways. Job. xxiii. 14 ; Isa. 1, 5 ; Prov. xxix.—*Bengel.*

It is remarkable, that no woman is mentioned throughout, as speaking against Christ in His life, or having a share in His death. On the contrary, He is anointed by a woman for His burial ; women are the last at His grave, the first at His Resurrection ; to a woman He first appeared ; women ministered to His wants at Galilee ; women bewailed and lamented Him ; a heathen woman interceded for His life with her husband the Governor ; and, above all, He was “born of a woman ;” so that, as a woman is the most conspicuous in the first transgression, and doomed to subjection and pain of childbirth, so she is not conspicuous in the second great crime of the children of Adam. Gen. iii. 15 ; 1 Tim. ii. 14.—*Is. Williams.*

V. 23.—Then were fulfilled the words of Isaiah (v. 17). “He looked for judgment, but behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, *a cry*.”—*S. Jerome*.

V. 24.—Innocence is no protection against tyrannical power; for accusing is proving, where malice and force are joined in the prosecution. Force governs the world, and success consecrates the cause. What avails it the lamb to have the better cause, if the wolf have the stronger teeth? It is to no purpose to stand reasoning, where the adversary is both party and Judge.—*Palmer*.

See ye to it. They already reap, in kind, the fruits of their abominable sin. For they get the same unfeeling, and, at the same time, ominous answer from Pilate, which they themselves had just given to Judas—*What is that to us? See thou to that.* v. 4.—*J. Ford*.

V. 25.—Our God, in the miracles of His grace, does “exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.” These men imprecate a curse on themselves and on their children, but some among them receive, instead, the offer and promise of a Blessing. The Blood of Jesus, not crying for vengeance, like that of Abel, speaketh pardon and peace to the penitent. *His Blood is on them and on their children* by a mystery of Grace. The Gospel is first preached at *Jerusalem*; and its language seems a very counterpart to the terms of this imprecation. *The Promise is unto you and to your children.* Gen. xxvii. 13; S. Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38, 39, 41; Rom. ix. 24; xi. 1, 2.—*J. Ford*.

V. 29.—They pierce Him with *thorns*, yet it is to crown Him; though it is in mockery, yet they worship;

though in the heart they believe not, yet Him, whom they are killing, they confess. They were without the motive of a good deed, yet God was not without His honour. He is saluted, as a King ; is crowned, as a Conqueror ; as God and Lord, is adored. ii. 2, 8, 16.—*S. Ambrose.*

Every one of our sins is a *thorn*, and nail, and spear to Him. While thou pourest down thy drunken carouses, thou givest thy Saviour a portion of *gall* ; while thou despisest His poor servants, thou *spittest in His face* ; while thou puttest on thy proud dresses and liftest up thy vain heart with high conceits, thou *settest a crown of thorns on His head* ; while thou wringest and oppressest His poor children, thou *whippiest* Him and drawest blood from His hands and feet. xxv. 45 ; Acts ix. 4 ; Heb. vi. 6.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 32.—Christ first carried His cross Himself, and after gave it unto Simon. So they, which govern others, ought first themselves to bear the Cross of Christ, which having learnt well to do then may they lay the same upon the shoulders of their subjects. But some there be, and that in religion, who bear the Cross of Christ, as Simon did ; but die not thereon. Such are those, who punish and make dead, as it were, their bodies with mortifications ; but do the same to please their own spiritual gust, or for vain glory's sake. These indeed bear the cross, as Simon did ; but do not truly die thereon, as Christ did. xxiii. 4 ; Acts xx. 22, 34, 35 ; 1 Cor. xi. 1 ; Col. ii. 20, 23.—*Bonaventura.*

The Christian's great conquest over the world is all contained in the mystery of Christ upon the Cross. It was there and from thence that He taught all Christians

how they were to come out of, and conquer, the world, and what they were to do, in order to be His disciples. And all the Doctrines, Sacraments, and Institutions of the Gospel are only so many explications of the meaning and applications of the benefit of this great mystery. And the state of Christianity implieth nothing else, but an entire absolute conformity to that spirit, which Christ showed in the mysterious Sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross. 1 Cor. ii. 2 ; Gal vi. 14 ; 1 S. Pet. iv. 1, 2 ; Heb. xii. 2.—*Wm. Law.*

V. 35.—The Cross was the most dolorous death, that ever can be endured. We scarce know what crucifying is. The Christian Emperors in honour of our Saviour banished that kind of suffering. . . . The manner of it was thus. First, there was a long beam, on which the party was to be stretched, and there was a cross beam, on which the hands were to be stretched ; they pulled them up upon the cross, before they fastened them ; they pulled him to his utmost length. And this is what the Psalmist speaks of. (Ps. xxii. 17). "I may tell all My bones." His ribs were so stretched, as that they even pierced the flesh. . . . Being thus stretched upon the cross to his full length, the hands and the feet were fastened and nailed to the wood. . . . The lower part of the hands, where the veins and sinews all meet together, is a place full of sense. Consider withal the bigness of the nails. (Ps. xxii. 16). "They have *digged* My hands ;" to shew the bigness of the spikes ; for the original bears it : "They *digged* Him." . . . There were two nails through His hands, and two through His feet : and, that you may better comprehend it, you must know that

toward the lower part of the cross there went along a ledge, or threshold, whereto His feet were nailed ; otherwise the flesh would have rent by reason of the nails, if He had hung by His hands alone. Then comes the lifting up ; “ as the serpent was lifted up,” so must Christ be lift (John iii. 14). As when a man is stretched to the full length, and should be with a jerk put up ; it is like a strapado, as it were the unjointing of a man ; and this is that, the Psalmist speaks of, “ All My bones are out of joint.” Consider withal the time, how long it was. It was six long hours. And it was not with Him, as with other men, in whom extremity of pains disannuls sense and blunts pains ; but Christ was in His perfect sense all the while. All the Jews could do could not take away His life from Him, till He would Himself. . . . Never was Christ stronger, nor ever cried louder, than when “ He gave up the ghost.” (Mark xv. 39). He was as strong at the *last*, as at the *first*. These matters seriously weighed, Oh, how do they aggravate the depth of His humiliation ! Seriously weigh them ; they are miserable and lamentable matters : yet in these lies our comfort.—*Abp. Usher.*

V. 37.—There was a necessity that Christ should die, in reference to His Regal Office. “ O King, live for ever,” is either the loyal or the flattering vote for earthly princes ; either the expression of our desires, or the suggestion of their own ; whereas our Christ never showed more Sovereign power, than in His Death. It was not for nothing that Pilate suddenly wrote and resolutely maintained what he had written, “ *This is the King of the Jews !*” That title on the Cross did signify no less than

that His Regal power was active even then : for having “spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it ;” and “through His Death destroyed him, that had the power of death, that is the devil.” Gen. xlii. 15, 16 ; Dan. iii. 9 ; v. 10 ; Ps. cx. 7 ; Phil. ii. 8, 9 ; 1 S. Pet. i. 11 ; S. John xii. 32.
Bp. Pearson.

Here is a title expressing no crime at all, and so vindicating Christ’s innocency. As there was never such a person crucified before, so there was never such a title affixed to the Cross before. S. John xix. 21, 22.—*Flavel.*

V. 39.—*That passed by.* Many did not even condescend to stop at the place. Ps. cxxix. 8 ; Lam. i. 12 ; S. Luke x. 31 ; Acts xviii. 17.—*Bengel.*

Wagging their heads. The man, who has once given himself this license of laughing at and deriding religion, seldom ever recovers himself to a sober countenance. Like men, whose custom of scoffing has made wry-mouthed, he lives and continues, and for the most part dies scoffing. He comes, as it were, laughing into hell, and seldom forsakes this habit of profaneness, till horror hath put smiling out of date. There is not a sin in the world, that sits closer to him, which hath once entertained it ; and he, that is once a merry atheist, seldom becomes a sober Christian. Isa. lvii. 4 ; Prov. i. 26 ; Gal. vi. 7.—*Dr. Hammond.*

It will appear, that blasphemy and profaneness, I mean in regard to Christianity, are absolutely without excuse. For there is no temptation to it, but from the wantonness of vanity or mirth ; and these, considering the infinite importance of the subject, are no such temptations, as to

afford any excuse for it. If this be a just account of things, and yet men can go on to vilify, or disregard Christianity, which is to talk and act, as if they had a demonstration of its falsehood, there is no reason to think they would alter their behaviour to any purpose, though there were a demonstration of its truth. Rom. i. 32 ; Isa. xxviii 14, 15, 18 ; Luke xvi. 31 ; 2 Pet. ii, 12, 13.—*Bp. Butler.*

V. 40.—Being “the children of the devil,” how do they imitate the very words of their father ; for the devil said, *If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down.* iv. 6.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 42. *Let Him now come down.* God never wrought a miracle to convince atheism, because His ordinary works convince it. Ps. xix. 1 ; Rom. i.—*Lord Bacon.*

For this very reason we believe ; because Christ did *not* straightway come down from the Cross, but finished there His work. iv. 6.—*Bengel.*

To come forth from the grave was a mightier deed. Rom. viii. 34.—*S. Chrysostom.*

V. 44.—Sin, like the thief upon the cross, when it is fast nailed and kept from its old tyranny, yet will, as much as it can, revile and spit out venom against Christ ; and therefore give it not over, break the legs of it (John xix. 32), crucify it clean, until it be quite dead. v. 29, 30 ; Rom. vi. 6 ; Heb. xii. 4.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

V. 45.—To these senseless and blasphemous speeches of yours all the elements give answer, and pass one and the same verdict upon you. The heavens, the earth, the sun, and the stars, by their fearful heavings, or their extra-

ordinary defections, pronounce you to be unworthy of their good offices, and display before the world the density of your blindness. Ps. xix. 1 ; Judg. v. 20 ; Isa. i. 2 ; Micah. vi. 1-3.—*Leo*.

We are all ready enough to cry out upon the cowardice of all our Saviour's apostles, and the treachery of one ; upon the malice of His accusers, the iniquity of His judge, the cruelty of His executioners ; but we do not consider that in all this we condemn ourselves. What danger dare we face, what man of power, what faction, have we the boldness to oppose, for Christ and His religion ? How small must that sum of money be, or that worldly interest, that cannot bribe us to betray the cause of Christ and His Church, the cause of truth and virtue, which was dearer to Him, than His life ? And how little of Judas's remorse do we feel for it, when done ? . . . How do we mock Him with our hypocritical professions ? How buffet Him with our bitter disputes ! How spit in His face, how mangle His flesh, how deluge His Blood, how crucify, how murder Him with our crimes ! How we act over again the dreadful tragedy of this day ! How the light sickens ! How darkness spreads itself over the whole earth ! Oh, return, return, Thou Eternal Light, into our understanding ! Oh, return, return, Thou warmth of the soul, into our hearts ! Shew us our vileness ; revive our piety. With Thee let us die to this world ; with Thee let us arise to a new life ; and to Thee with the Father and the Holy Spirit shall be ascribed all might, majesty, dignity, and dominion, now and for evermore ! Rom. ii. 1-3, 21, 22.—*P. Skelton*.

V. 46.—Our Saviour, at the point of His dereliction, cried out not “JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH,” but “Eli, Eli,” “My God, My God;” as not presuming at that time and in that capacity to call God by His titles of Paternal love and endearment, but as naming the Judge of the world, doing the extremest right upon His own Son, “treading the wine press alone” in the person of all mankind. Ps. xxii. 4–7; Exod. xxxiv. 5–7.—*Norris.*

The expression “*My God, My God,*” seems to intimate, that the indwelling presence of the Deity was not withdrawn; while *forsaken* would imply the loss of its comforting influence on the soul of the man Jesus. All antiquity, Bp. Andrews observes, allows the truth of that saying of Leo; “The Union was not dissolved; but the Vision was withdrawn.” S. John i. 18; iii. 13; x. 30.—*J. Ford.*

V. 48.—Dr. Buchanan in his *Christian Researches in Asia* tells us that *Hil* or *Hila*, is Syriac for *vinegar*. Hence, supposing our Lord to call for vinegar-water, the common drink of the soldiers present, they immediately brought it to Him. But Isidore Clarius observes in his excellent Commentary, that some forbade the vinegar being given to Him, as it would have had the effect of hastening His death; and they rather wished to see, *whether Elias would come to save Him.*—*J. Ford.*

V. 50.—*He yielded up the ghost.* (He let go His spirit.) To make both a true and perfect expiatory Sacrifice, there are five things indispensably necessary. 1. That, in being sacrificed, it should be substituted in the room of an offender to be punished for him, in order to his being released from his own personal obligation to

punishment (Lev. xvii. 11). 2. That the sacrifice should be pure, sound, and unblemished (Ex. xii. 5; Lev. xxii. 20, 21). 3. That it should be of such intrinsic worth and value, as that its death may be in some measure an equivalent commutation for the punishment, which the offender deserves (Heb. x. 4). 4. That it should be free and unforced on the part of the offerer (Lev. i. 3). 5. That it should be admitted and accepted by God, in the room and stead of the punishment, which is due to Him from the offender himself (Lev. xvii. 11). All these necessary conditions of a real and perfect expiatory Sacrifice do fully concentrate in the Death and Sacrifice of Christ. 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. i. 19; Heb. ix. 13-15; John x. 18; Acts ii. 24.—*Dr. J. Scott.*

V. 51.—As the Jews were wont to rend their garments, when they heard blasphemy, so the Temple, not enduring the execrable blasphemies against the Son of God, tore its veil in pieces. 2 Kings xviii. 37.—*Theophylact.*

V. 52.—He raises the daughter of Jairus from her bed, the widow's son from his coffin, Lazarus from his grave, the dead saints at Jerusalem from their rottenness; that it might appear, no degree of death can hinder the efficacy of His overruling command. He, that keeps the keys of death, cannot only make way for Himself through the commonest hall and outer rooms; but through the inwardmost and most reserved closets of darkness. Ps. xxiii. 4; cxxxix. 8; Rev. i. 18; Heb. ii. 14, 15.—*Bp. Hall.*

V. 54.—Divine Glory shone in that face on the Mount, but not so brightly as on Mount Calvary: this was the more glorious Transfiguration of the two. Though all the

light in the world in the sun and stars were collected together into one stupendous mass of light, it would be, but darkness, to the Glory of this seemingly dark and melancholy object (2 Cor. iii. 18). Here shines spotless *Justice*, incomprehensible *Wisdom*, and infinite *Love*, all at once. None of them darkens, eclipses the other ; every one of them gives a lustre to the rest. They mingle their beams and shine with united eternal splendour ; the just Judge, the merciful Father, and the wise Governor. No other object gives such a display of these perfections ; yea, all the objects, we know, give not such a display of any one of them. No where does Justice appear so awful, Mercy so amiable, or Wisdom so profound. Ps. xix. 1-7 ; John i. 18 ; xiv. 9 ; 2 Cor. iii. 18 ; Heb. i. 3.—*Maclaurin*.

Place now thyself, my soul, among the throng ; and hear, what they say ; and see, what they do ; and imagine, what they think. And, when thou art amazed with wonder at their perverseness and thy Saviour's patience, turn thine eye to His Cross ; and all, that their malice said in scorn of Him, let thy pity repeat to His honour. Thou art, O Jesu, the "*chosen of God*" and "*Son*" of the Eternal Father. Thou art "*the Christ*," whom the world expected, and by Thy sufferings our souls were to be redeemed. Thou couldst have easily *come down from the Cross*, and *saved Thyself* : but how then should Thy Love have triumphed ? How should we have been saved ? xi. 19 ; Rom iii. 4.—*Austin*.

V. 55.—*Afar off*. The day must come, when each person, who reads this, must be forsaken of all the world ; when relations, friends, and acquaintances, shall all retire, unable to afford him any help and assistance. In the

solitary and awful hour of our departure hence, let us remember to think on the Desertion, the Death, the Burial, the Resurrection of our Redeemer. xxvi. 56.—*Bp. Horne.*

V. 57.—Wisely hath Augustine remarked, that, “the reason why *poor* Lazarus was carried into the bosom of *rich* Abraham, was to shew us, that riches exclude no man from the kingdom of heaven.” The gate of heaven is open alike to all, who either make a discreet use of riches, or bear the want of them with patience.—*Calvin.*

These were disciples before, but secretly; now they appear openly. So great was the virtue of His Passion. xiv. 2; John xix. 38–40.—*J. Ellis.*

V. 61.—The description of the persons, who interred Christ, and the enumeration of their virtues and the everlasting commendation of her, who brake the box of precious ointment for His burial, have been thought sufficient grounds and encouragement for the careful and decent sepulture of Christians . . . whose bodies are not to be neglected after death, but carefully be laid up in the wardrobe of the grave, with due respect, as might become the honour of the dead and the comfort of the living. Gen. l. 1–6, 25, 26; Acts vii. 16; viii. 2.—*Bp. Pearson.*

Sitting over against the sepulchre. I believe, O crucified Love, that Thou wast really dead, and that there was a separation of Thy body and soul; . . . and that Thy Sacred body was buried, to assure us of Thy death. All love, all glory, be to Thee! By the love of Thy cross, dear Jesu, I live; in that I will only glory; that above all things will I study; that before all things will I value. And if

my love calls me to it, I will suffer on the cross for Thee, as Thou hast done for me, compassionate Jesu !—
Bp. Ken.

V. 63.—*While he was yet alive.* I think that fame, after death, is an indifferent thing for a Christian to trouble himself about : the heathens indeed were fond of it, because they found within themselves an impetuous desire of immortality and could not see any other way to effect it, but only by this ; but for us, Christians, to despise the joys of Paradise for the clattering of people's tongues is an unpardonable affront, offered to our religion. Gen. iv. 17 ; xi. 4 ; Job iii. 14 ; Isa. xlvii. 7 ; Ps. xlix.—
Palmer.

V. 64.—The fear lest His body should be stolen, the guarding and the sealing of the sepulchre, bespake both their folly and their infidelity ; inasmuch, as they were found capable of sealing the tomb of that person, at whose command they had seen with their own eyes the dead raised up from the grave. Isa. vi. 9, 10 ; Ezek. xii. 2.—
S. Hilary.

These people could believe, that John was risen from the dead, (Mark vi. 14,) though " John did no miracle," and though none bare witness of his resurrection ; and yet they could not bring their minds to believe, that Jesus was risen again, but said, that He had been secretly carried off, though Jesus was " approved of God by many miracles, wonders, and signs ;" though at His death the elements trembled ; and though Angels, Apostles, men, and women, vied with each other in announcing His resurrection and ascension. John iii. 18–22.—*Bede.*

V. 66.—Deliver us, O Lord, from the spirit of malice and detraction, and from contriving plots to oppress the innocent, and from trusting in our little arts, in defiance of the God of heaven, whose wisdom disappoints the craft of the wicked and makes their subtilest follies serve His ends. They seal the sepulchre; and that confirms our faith. They watch it with a guard; and that proves He was not stolen away. They conspire in a gross and palpable falsehood; and that demonstrates the truth of His Resurrection. Willing or unwilling, man, O Lord, will serve Thy ends. Ps. ix. 15; xxxv. 7, 8; Isa. xlv. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 19, 20.—*Austin.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 1.—In these pious women we observe, that the first step towards an happy participation in our Lord's Resurrection is to come to His *Sepulchre*, to seek Him in His Death ; that is, to come to His Sacraments, which are the symbols of His Passion. If in Baptism, we are "buried with Him," at his Supper we shall rise and feast with Him. But then we must still imitate these good women ; bring "the spices we have prepared" (Luke xxiv. 13), that is, those graces and good works, which are of a sweet savour, acceptable to the Lord. We must also come *early* ; that is, not only in the prime and morning of life, but with diligence and earnestness, ardent love, and holy zeal. All sloth must be shaken off, when we come to seek Christ ; especially on *the First day of the week*, the standing memorial of His Resurrection, the Day, which He, the Lord hath made and called by His own most Holy Name : and we shall then be sure to find Him.—*Wogan*.

V. 2.—*A great earthquake*. He was a lamb in His Death ; but a lion in his Resurrection. Isa. lxiii. 1-7 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 4.—*S. Bernard*.

If the earth so trembled, when the Lord rose for the justification of His people, how will it quake, when He shall rise up for the punishment of the wicked ? For the Prophet declares (Psa. lxxvi. 8), "The earth feared and

was still, when God arose to judgment." And if the earth could by no means brook the coming of an Angel, a servant of God, like unto itself, how will it abide the coming of God, as a Judge? Jer. xii. 5; Luke xxiii. 31. —*Pet. Chrysologus.*

As the women came to the grave in different companies during this eventful morning, so we may observe a diversity in the attendance of the Angelic host. The Angel of the Lord here is the Angel of fear, smiting and bringing low to the ground the enemies of the Lord. The Angel, described by S. Mark is the Angel of joy and peace, suitably represented by "a young man, sitting on the right side of the sepulchre, clothed in a long white garment," and not so much guarding the tomb, as inviting the seekers of the Lord to "Behold the place," where He was laid. In the two, we have a rehearsal, as it were, of what will take place at the general Resurrection; when the Angelic host will be as "the pillar of the cloud between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; a cloud and darkness to them, but a light to these" —an executioner of wrath upon the wicked, but a Ministry of Salvation to the just. xiii. 41; Exod. xiv. 20; Ps. i. 6, 7; 2 Cor. ii. 16.—*J. Ford.*

V. 5.—"Ye seek Jesus of *Nazareth*, which hath been *crucified*" (Mark xvi. 6). *Nazareth* might keep you back, the meanness of His birth; and *Crucified* more, the reproach of his death. In as much as these cannot let you, but *ye seek Him*, are ashamed neither of His poor birth, nor of His shameful death, but *seek Him*; and *seek Him*, not as some did, when He was alive, when good was to be done by Him, but even now, dead, when

nothing was to be gotten. . . *Fear not you*: nor let any fear, that so seek Him. Prov. i. 33; Zeph. ii. 1-3.—*Bp. Andrewes.*

See, how the Angels are the very first not to be ashamed of the mention of *the Cross*; so that we may be less surprised at Paul's glorying so proudly in it. Gal. vi. 14; Ex. xxv. 20; Acts ii. 23; 1 Pet. i. 12.—*Isid. Clarius.*

V. 6.—*He is risen.* It is evident that He had left the sepulchre, before it was opened. An Angel indeed was sent to roll away the stone; but this was not to let the Lord out, but to let the women in. . . The huge stone, which would have barred their entrance, had been no bar to His escape. Ps. xxix. 4; Isa. xlv. 1-3; lxiii. 1, 2.—*Bp. Horsley.*

V. 8.—It is no wonder, if we find the women here more earnest, than the Apostles, in their grief and in regard to the death, the burial, and the embalming of the Lord's Body. The woman is the first in the expression of her grief, for she was the first in hastening to the fall; she goes before to the tomb, who was the precursor to corruption; she brings the tidings of the Resurrection, who had been the herald of death; she, who had conveyed to the man the message of so dreadful a destruction, herself conveys to men the sounds of a great Salvation; that the loss, which she occasioned by her suggestion to unbelief, she might now compensate for by the tidings of faith. Gen. iii. 6, 12; 1 Tim. ii. 14, 15.—*Pet. Chrysologus.*

Great joy. This Day (Easter) is a day of rejoicing on earth, and it is a Festival also in heaven. For, if the

conversion of one sinner gives the Angels joy, how much more must the rejoicing be, when the whole world is rescued from the tyranny of the devil? S. Luke xv. ; Isa. ix. 3 ; Rom. xiv. 12 ; Rev. xiv. 1-5.—*S. Chrysostom.*

On *Sunday*, or the *Lord's Day* rather, we may let our hearts dwell on the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven, and the vast Glory of the world to come ; who they are, that shall enjoy it, on what terms that crown may be purchased ; the transcendency of the felicity, above all, that the world can call rich, and beautiful and glorious ; how pleasant that life will be, how free from hunger, and thirst, and cold, and nakedness, from all possibility of sin and danger, from death and sorrow, from sadness, from anxiety, corruption, perturbation, from changes, and sickness, and weakness, and infirmities, from fear and storms and tempests ; from the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil ; how full of love, and delight, and ravishment it will be ; how sweetly the weary soul will rest in the bosom of everlasting mercy ; how glorious a sight the New Jerusalem will be ; how reviving a spectacle to behold the Guard-Royal of Angels shining in robes of light ; the noble army of Martyrs ; the goodly fellowship of Patriarchs and Prophets ; and, what is more, Christ, as man, Glorified with His Father's Glory, shining like the sun in His meridian lustre ! Ps. xxxi. 19 ; Isa. lxiii. 13, 14 ; Cant. ii. 10-15 ; Rev. xxi. 22.—*Dr. Horneck.*

V. 9.—*They* were first permitted to see and to know Him, who loved Him with the greatest ardour, who sought Him with the greatest zeal. xi. 12 ; Cant. ii. 14 ; Ps. xci. 14-16 ; cv. 4.—*S. Cyprian.*

He rose, when the sepulchre was closed, to show that that body, which had been shut up therein dead, was now become immortal. He now offers *His feet to be held* by the women, to show that He had real flesh, which can be touched by mortal creatures. 1 S. John i 1-5; 2 S. John 7.—*Rabanus*.

V. 10.—*Go tell my Brethren*. The Angels had said the same before (Mark xvi. 7); our Lord agrees with them. But with what a different accent of love and tenderness. "Go tell His *disciples*," were their words; "Go, tell *My brethren*," Blessed Lord, were Thine. Thou hast not called the Angels brethren; but men Thou art pleased to call so. O most gracious Saviour, this word, that proceeds out of Thy Blessed lips, "*Go tell my brethren*," how harmonious it is to my ears!" . . . Speak it, Lord, to my heart! . . . that I may attain to such a resemblance of life, as this most dear and near relation requires. xii. 49, 50; Heb. ii. 11.—*Austin*.

He sends them no harsh and upbraiding message (for their base desertion of Him), but speaks comfortably and lovingly to them, in terms of tenderness and dearest affection. Thus, Joseph-like, he comforts them, "I am your *brother* Joseph" (Gen. xlv. 4). They sold him; these forsook Christ: yet still, "I am your brother," and He asks them not, as Joseph did them, "Doth my Father live?" but assures them, that His Father lives, and is a Father unto them also (John xx. 17). Nay, He exceeds Joseph in compassion. Joseph acted a part of strangeness and severity for a time: Christ, His first message to them is love. Thus, like the good father in the Gospel, He receives His returning prodigal, neither checks him, nor expostulates with him; but runs, and

meets, and kisses, and embraces him with all loving affection. How loving will He be to those, that never forsake Him, that is thus sweet and gracious to them, that fled from Him and durst not even own Him? James i. 5; Luke xv. 20; Heb. ii. 11, 12; 2 Pet. i. 11.—*Bp. Brownrig.*

It is the opinion of many able and learned theologians that this was the appearance of our Lord, after His Resurrection, to which St. Paul adverts (1 Cor. xv. 6), when he says, that "Christ was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." All his other appearances seem to have been of a private character; this was public: neither was this a sudden appearance (Luke xxiv. 31), for the time and the scene of it were fixed upon and known before; nor was it in a secret chamber, in the evening (John xx. 19), but in the broad open day-light. Bp. Horsley grounds on these facts this sagacious remark. "An appearance in *Galilee*, the province, where the family of the real Jesus lived, where the whole of His own life had been passed before the commencement of His Ministry and the greater part of it afterwards; where He performed His first miracles, and delivered His first discourses; a public appearance in this part of the country, at a set time and place, was a step, on which an impostor would hardly have risked his credit." Exod. iii. 10; Matt. ii. 23; xi. 20; John ii. 11; Acts iii. 16; iv. 14; xxvi. 26.—*J. Ford.*

V. 12.—O ye wretches! O ye worst of men! You were either on the watch, and so should have guarded Him; or, you were fast asleep, and so were quite unconscious of what happened. Ps. xii. 3, 4; S. Luke xix. 22.—*S. Augustine.*

V. 15.—*We will persuade him.* Be very careful to speak truth, and beware of lying (Prov. vi. 16, 17 ; Hos. iv. 1 ; Rev. xxi. 8, 27). As lying is displeasing to God, so it is offensive to man, and always at the latter end returns to the disadvantage and reproach of him, that useth it. It is the evidence of a weak and unmanly mind (Prov. xiv. 15). Be careful that you believe not hastily strange news and strange stories (Acts xxi. 38 ; xxviii. 22), and be much more careful that you do not repeat them, though at second-hand. For, if it prove an untruth (as commonly strange stories prove so), it brings an imputation of levity upon him, that reports, and, possibly, some disadvantage to others. Prov. xviii. 8 ; Ps. xv. 1, 2.—*Sir M. Hale.*

Deliver us, O Lord, from envying the prosperity of any, or plotting maliciously to suppress the truth. Deliver us from persisting in any known sin, or tempting others to conspire with us in our wickedness. Whatever we do will certainly come to Thy ears, O thou great Governor of the world ? And nothing but Thy mercy can persuade Thee and secure us. Deliver us, O Lord, from being tempted by others and engaging our consent to their sinful enticements. Deliver us from acting wickedly, when we consented weakly ; especially deliver us from those infectious sins, which spread far, and corrupt beyond the present age. Gen. xlix. 6 ; Ps. xxvi. 5 ; 1 Kings xiii. 34 ; 2 Tim. iv. 18.—*Austin.*

The credibility of evidence in all cases arises from the number, the information, and the veracity of the witnesses. The *number* of the witnesses in the present case, if we reckon only the eleven Apostles (and many

more might be reckoned), was far greater, than has ever been deemed sufficient to establish a fact in a Court of Justice, in the most intricate and weighty causes. Their *information* upon the general point in question, that our Lord was seen alive after His crucifixion, was the most complete, that can be imagined; they could not be mistaken in His person, who had so long and so constantly attended Him. The *veracity* of a witness is to be measured, not simply by the probity of his disposition and his habits of sincerity, but by the motives, which circumstances may present to him to adhere to the truth, or to deviate from it.—*Bp. Horsley.*

V. 16.—*Galilee* is the place *appointed*. 'Twas a safe place. He graciously provides for His disciples' safety. He calls them out of Jerusalem, the place of persecution, makes them withdraw themselves from that bloody generation, where they were beset with dangers, leads them into a place of safety, where with greater freedom they might converse with Him. Thus God speaks to His people (Isa. xxvi. 20). Indeed, when they were "endued with strength from above," then He bids them fill Jerusalem with their preaching; now in their fears He mercifully tenders them. Here's our comfort in all our dangers. He will either shelter our weakness, that we may avoid them; or endue us with strength, that we may undergo them. Deut. xxxiii. 25; Ps. ix. 10; Isa. xxvi. 1-4; Phil. iv. 6, 7.—*Bp. Brownrig.*

V. 17.—They *doubted* greatly, that we should not doubt at all. No conclusions are so sure, as those we arrive at after doubting. S. John xx. 28; Acts xiv. 17 20, 34; xxvi. 9; 1 Cor. xi. 19.—*Leo.*

V. 18.—Before He had *power on earth* (ix. 6) ; now He has power in *Heaven* also (Phil. ii. 9–11). And how does He employ His power ? Not in judgment, but in mercy. “He is Head over all things to the Church.” Eph. i. 22. *Go ye and teach all, &c.*—*J. Ford.*

V. 19.—When the Christian Church comes to recognize more truly the obligation imposed upon it by the original command of its Founder, *Go teach all nations*, a command, which, having never been recalled or abrogated, can never be obsolete, it will awaken another energy of its Apostolic office and character, than has been witnessed in many later ages, in this most noble work of piety and charity combined ; and thereby begin to discharge an inalienable duty, in furthering the clear design of the Gospel and perhaps also the consummation of prophecy. Whether belief shall be universal, we know not : but as to the duty of making an universal tender and communication of the Christian Faith, it is too clear to be denied, and too sacred to be innocently neglected. Luke ii. 31, 32 ; Acts xiii. 46, 47 ; Rev. xiv. 6, 7 ; xv. 3, 4.—*Davison.*

By *Name* is meant either an Authority, derived to the Apostles, in the virtue of which all nations were to be Baptized ; or, that the persons, so Baptized, are dedicated to *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. Either of these senses, as it proves them all to be Persons, so it sets them in an equality, in a thing, that can only belong to the Divine Nature. Baptism is the receiving men from a state of sin and wrath into a state of favour, and into the rights of the sons of God and the hopes of eternal happiness, and a calling them by the Name of God. These are things, that can only be offered and assured to

men in the Name of the Great and Eternal God ; and therefore, since, without any distinction or note of inequality, they are all Three set together, as Persons, in whose Name this is to be done, they must all Three be the true God. . . The plainness of this charge, and the great occasion, on which it was given, makes this an argument of such force and evidence, that it may justly determine the whole matter. Isa. vi. 3, 8 ; 1 Cor. i. 2, 13-16 ; 1 John v. 7 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.—*Bp. Burnet.*

All Christians are Baptized in, or into, *the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, that is, into the faith, service, and worship of the Holy Trinity ; and so from their very Baptism are obliged to render and give to each Person Divine worship and adoration. Indeed, this is the main difference between the worship of Christians and Jews. The Jews worship God, as one single Person, acknowledging neither Son, nor Personal Holy Ghost, subsisting in the Divine Nature ; but we Christians worship God in a Trinity of Persons and Unity of Essence—God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; three Persons and One God. Ex. iii. 13-15 ; Eph. ii. 18 ; Rev. i. 4 ; iv. 8.—*Bp. Bull.*

V. 20.—*Teaching them to observe, &c.* Question not, my soul, why God doth not, by His Supreme and Omnipotent power, in one and the same instant call, justify, sanctify, and glorify His Elect ; since, as He did not condemn us, so He will not save us *without ourselves*. He saves us without our merits indeed, not without our work. He hath therefore in His infinite wisdom annexed conditions to His Covenant, and ordained faith, repentance, and all other good works to be, as so many degrees in our

ascent to happiness ; that so earth might be our school to fit us for Heaven, and the life of grace, which is imperfect glory, might prepare us for the life of Glory, which is grace in perfection. Rom. viii. 29 ; 1 Pet. i. 2 ; John xv. 16.—*Sir J. Harington.*

Behold I am with you, &c. “It is My Spirit, My Wisdom, My Grace, that produceth these heavenly effects. I do you the honour to make you My instruments ; but I will be the principal Agent ; regard not your weakness, but My power ; and doubt not, that I will do by you whatsoever I shall give you in charge.” Let this be our encouragement. Christ would never send us to Baptize with water ; but He meaneth to *Baptize with the Holy Ghost*. He will never send us to dispense bread and wine ; but He will be present to give unto believers *His Body and Blood*. If he send us “to bind and loose on earth,” Himself will *bind and loose in heaven*. Finally, “the foolishness of preaching,” which He uttereth by our mouths, Himself doth accompany with *a demonstration of His Spirit*. Ex. iii. 11, 12 ; Josh. i. 5 ; x. 19, 20 ; 1 Cor. iii. 5–9 ; 2 Cor. iii. 1–6 ; 1 Th. i. 5.—*Bp. Lake.*

The express promise of our Lord, assuring us of the perpetuity of His Church is embodied in His Holy Supper. For He commands that His Death should be “shown forth,” and this Supper be administered, “until He come.” 1 Tim. vi. 14.—*Melancthon.*

Always, &c. S. Chrysostom speaks elegantly. “The Catholick Church may be assaulted, but not defeated ; it may be distressed, but not destroyed ; it may be wounded, but it shall not fall ; it may be tossed, but not wrecked ; it may and shall be militant, but yet never overcome.”

But, though the Catholick, or Universal Church, be thus stable and perpetual, yet the Church of any particular place and nation may fail. Though God will not "remove His Candlestick" quite out of this world, but will always have a Church in some place or other, yet it is not certain it shall be in this or that nation. This should make particular Churches study their preservation, and use such means, as may be effectual to that purpose. If the professors of Christianity in any nation shall become vain in their imaginations, exchanging plain and wholesome truth for fond speculations and opinions; if they shall turn factious and schismatical, neglecting their spiritual guides and pastors; if they be dissolute in their manners, and confute their religion by their lives; they will provoke God to remove His Candlestick and bring confusion upon them. Christ is so far from promising safety and protection to any particular Church and people, who neglect their own safety, that He threatens ruin and destruction to them (Rev. ii. 5). How careful then should we be, of this nation, to preserve the Gospel among us, lest God carry it away from us unto a people, that will better "bring forth the fruit thereof." xiii. 12; xvi. 18, 19; xxi. 43; Rom. xi. 19-23; Isa. xiv. 17; 2 S. John 2; Rev. ii. 3.—*March.*

Amen. Lord, give us strength to do what Thou commandest; and then command us whatsoever pleaseth Thee. Ex. xxviii. 15; Ps. cxix. 32.—*S. Augustine.*

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